

VCU Shatter Connections

THE MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY ▶ Spring 2010

Open for fitness

Virginia Commonwealth University's
renovated Cary Street Gym pumps up
options for on-campus fitness and fun

CIRCA

Virginia Commonwealth University students park their bikes along Linden Court across from the James Branch Cabell Library. Last fall, the university installed \$60,000 in additional bike racks, as well as custom-designed racks for scooters and mo-peds, offering students more than 200 spots to secure their rides.





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Alumni, join the VCU sustainability movement!

This issue of Shafer Court Connections focuses on the many and varied faces of sustainability associated with Virginia Commonwealth University, including reporting on the special Year of the Environment activities and programs.

Sustainability has most simply been defined as "providing the best for people and the environment, both now and in the indefinite future. Sustainability is a means of configuring civilization and human activity so that society and its members are able to meet their needs and express their greatest potential in the present while preserving biodiversity and natural ecosystems, and planning and acting for the ability to maintain these ideals indefinitely."

As I read the articles in this issue, I reflect on the vital role alumni play in sustaining their alma mater. Our VCU Alumni Association President Donna Dalton (M.Ed. '00/E) has focused on celebrating VCU and has challenged alumni to "Connect, Engage and Serve." The strategic initiatives led by her and the VCUAA board of directors are designed to encourage and bolster alumni engagement in support of the sustainability of your university.

VCU President Michael Rao, Ph.D., has invited alumni, in unprecedented numbers, to reconnect with VCU and has challenged alumni to be engaged "as partners in shaping the future of this great institution." When he says "everything we do must be done in the context of strengthening the living and learning environment for our students to ensure their success," I see opportunities for alumni to make value-added contributions to those efforts. I am excited about alumni committing to help the president and the rest of our community realize those aspirations.

I urge you to become a part of the VCU sustainability movement ... join and volunteer with the alumni association ... make a gift to the Opportunity VCU scholarship campaign to support our most qualified and motivated students ... volunteer as a VCU-educated citizen-leader where you live, work and play.

The time for full and unbridled alumni engagement at VCU has arrived, and we need each and every one of you to be a part of it!

Yours for VCU,



Gordon A. McDougall
Assistant Vice President, University Alumni Relations
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P.S. Starting this year, April is VCU Alumni Month. Be sure to log in at www.vcu-mcvalumni.org to keep up with what's happening. Go, Rams, Go!



VCU Shafer Court Connections

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VCU sophomore Atalie Senty and junior Donald Hawkins make tracks at the new Cary Street Gym, which opened in January.

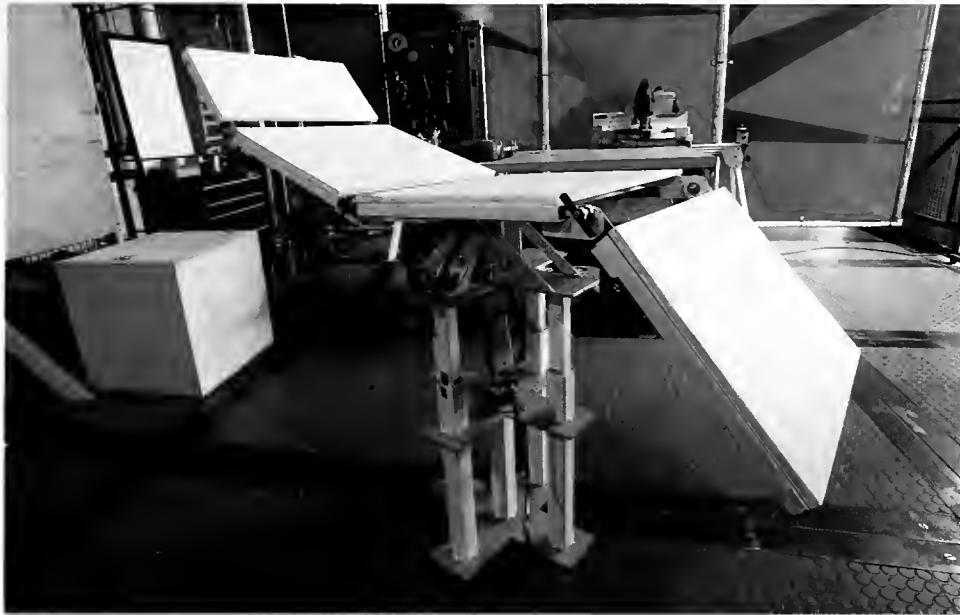


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University news

Virginia Commonwealth University news and research. For the latest updates, visit VCU online at www.news.vcu.edu.



The operating table prototype conceived by the da Vinci team starts as a 24-inch, easy-to-ship cube and assembles into a full-size, hospital-grade table that moves in three dimensions.

VCU da Vinci Center student project earns high honors

The VCU da Vinci Center's prototype of a \$500 operating table for developing countries stood out in a competition in Boston, winning a top honor among 60 entrants from colleges such as Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The VCU da Vinci Center for Innovation in Product Design and Development's portable operating table won in the category of "Greatest Potential for Patient Benefit" at the Center for Integration of Medicine and Innovative Technology Congress poster contest in Boston.

For the innovation poster contest, Lauren O'Neill (B.F.A. '09/A) won for "Operation Simple: A Low-Cost, Collapsible Surgical Table for Developing Countries." O'Neill was part of a team that worked on a prototype for the table last year in the da Vinci Center, which brings together students from VCU's schools of Engineering, Business and the Arts.

The last stage of the project is the production of five tables, which will be given to hospitals in Bangladesh and Honduras for field-testing this spring.

Fellowship selects VCU arts alumna

Arts alumna Margaret "Maggie" O'Brien (B.A. '09/H&S; B.F.A. '09/A) was named a finalist for the Rhodes Scholarship, the oldest international fellowship for academic study. Each year, 32 U.S. students are among more than 80 Rhodes Scholars worldwide who take degree courses at Oxford University.

A Blacksburg, Va., native, O'Brien enrolled in the VCU Honors College and earned bachelor's degrees in sculpture and political science. She hopes to pursue a career working

to evaluate and improve the use of foreign aid as an international development tool.

"The entire university community is proud of Maggie O'Brien," says VCU President Michael Rao, Ph.D.

As an undergraduate at VCU, O'Brien's sculptures were selected for several exhibits and awards. She was involved in student government and spent time working in the Virginia General Assembly. O'Brien also was selected for an English-Speaking Union Fellowship that allowed her to spend three weeks at Exeter College at Oxford in the summer of 2007.

Center supports nursing research

The VCU School of Nursing received a \$2.6 million grant from the National Institute of Nursing Research, part of the National Institutes of Health, to develop a P30 Center of Excellence in Biobehavioral Approaches to Symptom Management.

Under the five-year grant, the center will support the work of several beginning nursing researchers who will explore the symptoms and impact of fatigue in a variety of patients, including women with fibromyalgia, women with breast cancer, pregnant women, women with risk for cardiometabolic illness and individuals with sickle cell disease.

Symposium focuses on Islamic art

Scholars from around the world traveled to Cordoba, Spain, in November to explore the many uses of color in Islamic art and culture during the Third Biennial Hamad bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art.

Co-sponsored by the VCU School of the Arts, the VCU School of the Arts in Qatar and the Qatar Foundation, "And Diverse Are Their Hues: Color in Islamic Art and Culture" featured 13 speakers from the Middle East, Europe, Australia and the U.S.

Previous symposia were held in Richmond, Va., in 2004 and in Doha, Qatar, in 2007. The proceedings of the 2007 symposium, "Rivers of Paradise: Water in Islamic Art and Culture," were recently published by Yale University Press.

Dar al-Huffaz of Iran's Ardabil shrine

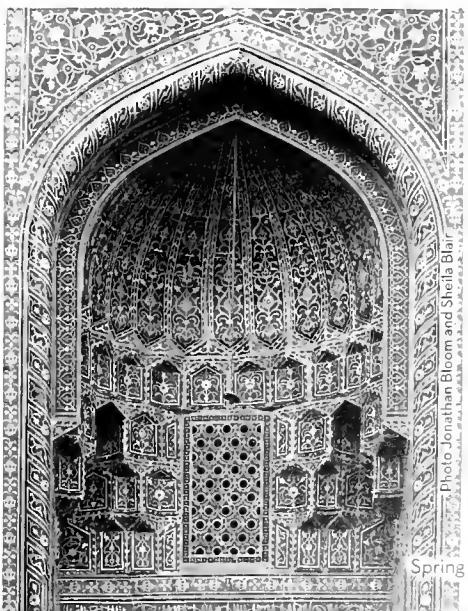


Photo: Jonathan Blum and Sheila Blair



VCU Libraries celebrates its 2 millionth volume with (from left) Stephen Gottfredson, Ph.D., VCU provost and vice president of academic affairs; VCU President Michael Rao, Ph.D.; Jodi Koste, archivist, VCU Libraries; and John Ulmschneider, university librarian.

VCU Libraries celebrates milestone

In October, VCU Libraries celebrated the acquisition of the university's 2 millionth library volume. In just 16 years the VCU Libraries' collection, including books, journals, media and electronic resources, has doubled in size.

The 2 millionth addition to the VCU collections was Marvel Comics' "Amazing Spider-Man, #583," featuring President Barack Obama. The selection of the landmark comic highlights the diverse offerings of the VCU Libraries and recognizes VCU's Comic Arts Collection, one of the largest of its kind in North America with more than 125,000 items.

VCU receives 'best neighbor' nod

VCU earned a Top 25 "best neighbor" title for a second time in a 2009 national survey that recognizes revitalization, cultural renewal, economics, community service and development.

The University of Pennsylvania and the University of Southern California tied for the No. 1 position. VCU was in the No. 11 spot.

The survey pointed to VCU's implementation of a nationally recognized engagement program, "VCU Community Solutions," that included the 2008 40th Anniversary "40 Acts of Caring" awards to projects, activities or initiatives that partnered VCU employees, students or alumni with local, regional or national/international communities.

Alliance works to combat poverty

The Jessie Ball duPont Fund awarded a \$190,580 grant to VCU on behalf of a coalition working to prevent and reduce poverty in the Richmond region.

The three-year grant will be used to create a VCU-United Way Financial Stability Alliance.

The alliance is working to expand the capacity of existing Volunteer Income Tax Assistance organizations to provide free tax-preparation services to low-income residents, while also linking them to asset-building organizations and services in the area and evaluating the impact of the effort.

"This initiative involves multiple units within the university — the School of Social Work, the School of Business, the School of Mass Communications and the Division of Community Engagement as well as several service organizations located across the Richmond-Petersburg area," says Anthony J. Mallon, Ph.D., principal investigator and assistant professor in the School of Social Work.

The grant also will support annual community forums to discuss project outcomes.

New study examines schizophrenia

The VCU School of Pharmacy's Center for Biomarker Research and Personalized Medicine received a \$4.5 million grant from the National Institute of Mental Health to detect schizophrenia methylation markers that could lead to better drug therapies to fight the mental illness.

"DNA methylation studies are really an exciting new direction in genetics," says principal investigator Edwin Van den Oord, Ph.D., pharmacy professor and director of the center.

DNA methylation is a process that changes how genes work through chemically modifying DNA. Methylation markers are accessible at the stable DNA level, making them easy to use in clinical settings to improve diagnosis and individualize drug treatment.

Grant funds global health research

VCU received a \$100,000 Grand Challenges Explorations grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to support an innovative global health research project conducted by Luiz Shozo Ozaki, Ph.D., associate professor in VCU Life Sciences' Center for the Study of Biological Complexity.

Ozaki's project, "Bacterial viruses as tool for blocking transmission of the malaria parasite," was one of 76 grants announced in the third funding round of Grand Challenges Explorations, an initiative to help scientists around the world explore bold and largely unproven ways to improve health in developing countries. The grants were provided to scientists in 16 countries on five continents. The initiative is highly competitive, receiving almost 3,000 proposals in this round.

"The award is important in that it will enable us to contribute one more gun for the arsenal to combat malaria, which at this moment is tiny," says Ozaki, who will be working on the project with Gail Christie, Ph.D., professor in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology.

Student receives Boren scholarship

Caitlin Canney, a senior in the VCU Honors College, is studying in Morocco after earning a National Security Education Program David L. Boren Scholarship, which focuses on geographic areas, languages and fields of study deemed critical to U.S. national security.

Canney, who is from Medford, Mass., is spending the 2009-10 academic year studying Arabic language and political science at Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco. Canney is pursuing dual degrees in French and political science with a concentration in international relations as well as a minor in psychology at VCU. Upon graduation, she plans to continue

Administrative notes

Ed Grier, formerly president of Disneyland Resort, joined the VCU School of Business March 8 as dean. **David Urban, Ph.D.**, professor of marketing who had served as interim dean since July 2009, was named executive associate dean of the school.

Ronald J. Hunt, D.D.S., who served for 12 years as dean of the VCU School of Dentistry, left the university in March to become associate dean for academic affairs at the Midwestern University College of Dental Medicine in Glendale, Ariz.

Kenneth B. Kahn, Ph.D., joined the VCU da Vinci Center for Innovation in Product Design and Development as director. He also holds a faculty position in the business school. Kahn previously was at Purdue University, where he was a professor and director of Purdue's Burton D. Morgan Center for Entrepreneurship.

Sue Ann Messmer, chief of staff in the Office of the President, retired Feb. 1. She also served as vice president for university relations.

Richard Toscan, Ph.D., is retiring June 30 as dean of the VCU School of the Arts. He also served as vice provost for international education.

Wayne Turnage, former chief of staff for Virginia Gov. Tim Kaine, joined VCU as chief of staff in the Office of the President Jan. 16.

John Venuti, formerly a major with the Richmond Police Department, became chief of the VCU Police Department Feb. 1.

her studies of linguistics and the Middle East in graduate school. Ultimately, she hopes to work for the U.S. Department of State, possibly as a foreign service officer.

The NSEP David L. Boren Scholarships provide up to \$20,000 of support for U.S. undergraduates who will pursue the study of languages and cultures currently under-represented in study abroad. In return, recipients commit to working for the federal government for at least one year after the completion of their education.

Dining hall earns 'distinction' award

VCU's Market 810 at Shafer Court Dining Center was named a Dining Hall of Distinction by University Business Magazine, which praised the dining center's abundant food options, warm atmosphere and responsive customer service, among other qualities.

Market 810, operated by Aramark, was the winner in the Public Institution category.

Dining Halls of Distinction represent excellence in all aspects of dining operations, including atmosphere, service, variety of offerings, guest satisfaction, environmental sustainability and financial stability. A total of 65 higher education institutions from around the country submitted applications for the award.



Market 810's marketplace-style "mini-restaurants" offer performance cooking stations with made-to-order service.



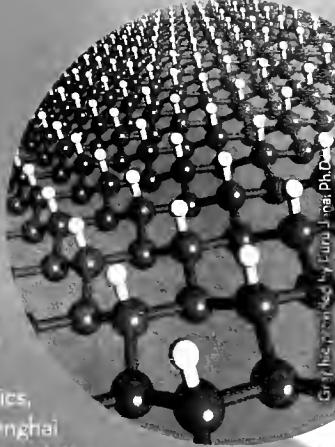
Research report

Nano-material exhibits magnetic properties

An international team of researchers designed a new graphite-based, magnetic nano-material that acts as a semiconductor and could help material scientists create the next generation of electronic devices like microchips.

The team of researchers from the VCU Department of Physics, Peking University in Beijing, the Chinese Academy of Science in Shanghai and Tohoku University in Sendai, Japan, used theoretical computer modeling to design the new material they called graphone, which is derived from an existing material known as graphene.

The study, supported by a grant from the National Natural Science Foundation of China, the National Science Foundation and the U.S. Department of Energy, appeared online in the journal *Nano Letters*, a publication of the American Chemical Society.



Graphone, rendered by Cun Li, Ph.D.

Advanced treatment plan doubles cardiac arrest survival rates

VCU Medical Center and the Richmond Ambulance Authority have dramatically improved resuscitation and survival rates for cardiac arrest patients by training and equipping paramedics to begin lowering a patient's body temperature in the field during resuscitation and following up at the hospital with high-tech strategies to improve the odds of survival.

The initiative, known as the Advanced Resuscitation Cooling Therapeutics and Intensive Care Center, or ARCTIC, is the most comprehensive program of its kind in the U.S. and has resulted in an almost twofold improvement in the return of spontaneous circulation, from 25 percent in 2001 using conventional treatments to 46 percent in 2008. In turn, the survival rate to hospital discharge improved from 9.7 percent in 2003 to 17.9 percent at the end of 2008. The national average is less than 7 percent.

"What we now know is that we have to protect the brain and vital organs during resuscitation and after the heart is restarted, and this has led to a totally new strategy for how we treat cardiac arrest patients," says Joseph P. Ornato, M.D., chair in the Department of Emergency Medicine at the VCU School of Medicine and operational medical director of the Richmond Ambulance Authority.

Between 2001 and 2006, the team evaluated 1,596 cases of adult, out-of-hospital cardiac arrest events in Richmond, Va., and concluded that a building-block strategy composed of a unique combination of mechanical chest compressions, airway management, drugs that restart the heart and cold saline given during resuscitation before the return of spontaneous circulation, sequentially improved patient outcomes.

Fewer new products explain auto industry's market share loss

A failure to introduce new products at the same rate as foreign manufacturers explains the dwindling market share of U.S. auto companies, according to a new VCU study published in the *Journal of Business Research*.

"Non-Price Determinants of Automotive Demand: Restyling Matters Most," a study by three economists in the VCU School of Business — Oleg Korenok, Ph.D., assistant professor of economics, George Hoffer, Ph.D., professor of economics, and Edward Millner, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Economics — analyzed secular market share changes in the automobile and light-truck submarkets. Their research revealed that new product, as measured by restyling, represents the dominant determinant of demand in the auto industry. Other factors, such as price, advertising, rebranding, warranty curtailments, new safety appliances and even changes in vehicle reliability, had minimal impact on demand.

Domestic automotive producers saw their market share fall from 72.9 percent in 1995 to 47.4 percent in 2008. Over the 1995-2006 model years, Japanese manufacturers restyled on average every third year, while U.S. manufacturers restyled every four years.



Open

Virginia Commonwealth University
125,000 square feet of workout



fitness

VCU's newly renovated Cary Street Gym boasts a state-of-the-art facility for students, faculty, staff and alumni.



Cary Street Gym

The gym's 18,000-square-foot main room and mezzanine house more than 185 cardiovascular machines — including 41 treadmills — and several lines of selectorized equipment, as well as a large free-weight area. Flat-screen TVs (70 of them!) line the walls. The light-filled space offers access to a 38-foot climbing wall and 12-foot boulder. The facility also accommodates group fitness classrooms, two racquetball courts, a 24-bike cycling room and a multi-activity room for indoor soccer and cricket, dodgeball, box lacrosse, floor hockey or 3-on-3 football. The all-in-one gym, says Director of VCU Recreational Sports Tom Diehl, has capacity for 4,000 users per day. By comparison, the Stuart C. Siegel Center, now an athletics-only training facility, averaged 1,000 users per day.

Want to see more photos? Go online to <http://pictures.vcu.edu>. To watch a video, visit <http://go.vcu.edu/csgvideo>.



Entryway

Members enter the gym using RecPass, a finger recognition reader aimed at speeding up the check-in process. At least 10 to 15 VCU Recreational Sports staff members work throughout the gym, including at the resource bar on the main floor in the cardiovascular fitness center. Enrolled students enjoy full access to the facility. Annual membership rates range from \$169 to \$281.67 depending on member status as an alumni or faculty or staff member. The facility offers 1,325 lockers for day use or rent. Hours are 6 a.m. to midnight, Monday through Friday; 8 a.m. to midnight on Saturday; and 9 a.m. to midnight on Sunday.



Four-court gym

The four-court hardwood gymnasium allows members to play basketball, volleyball, table tennis and badminton, and includes bleachers for spectators. Specially designed shades covering the windows automatically raise and lower depending on the temperature and keep the gym lights from shining into nearby neighborhoods. The three-lane track above measures slightly less than 200 meters, with one mile equaling 9.5 laps for the inside lane, 8.6 laps for the middle lane and 8.4 laps for the outside lane.



Green Alley

When constructing the gym, designers retained the red brick exterior of the old Cary Street Gym, formerly the Richmond City Auditorium, built in 1890. "Green Alley" in the silver-level, LEED-certified facility runs along one wall of the original structure. The alley, as well as the entire building, offers members free Wi-Fi access and a quiet spot to sit and relax.

Alumni can try out the Cary Street Gym or the MCV Campus Recreation and Aquatic Center for free for any two weeks during April as part of Alumni Month. Call (804) 828-7020 for details.



Pools

The gym's aquatic center includes two heated indoor swimming pools: an 83-degree, four-lane activity pool complete with water slide and an 86-degree leisure pool that includes a multi-person whirlpool spa set at 104 degrees, a zero-entry area for beginner swimmers and a vortex chamber in which a gentle current swirls around swimmers, similar to floating down a lazy river. Outside the pool area, a heated wet classroom provides a warm space for those taking swimming lessons. Both pools feature a new type of sanitation system gentler on the environment, skin and eyes. Electrolytic generation produces chlorine from a small amount of salt added to the pool water and then converts the generated chlorine back to salt for reuse.

MCV Campus recreation center gets a makeover

Last fall, the MCV Campus Recreation and Aquatic Center revealed its new look. The 7,000-square-foot facility boasts a fully renovated fitness center and locker rooms. More than 90 pieces of cardiovascular equipment fill the sizeable main room lined with 16 flat-screen TVs. A large area against a wall of windows houses selectorized and free-weight equipment. Additional space near the locker rooms offers a stretching zone.

The center's racquetball courts and two-court gymnasium for basketball, volleyball and badminton remain, as well as the 25-meter heated indoor pool and group exercise classroom. The entrance, in the Jonah L. Lerrick Student Center, offers RecPass access at turnstiles, for swift check-in.

Named for Jonah Lupton Lerrick, YMCA director at MCV from the early 1920s to 1959, Lerrick opened in November and features a ballroom, conference room and two meeting rooms, as well as a fully functioning Starbucks and Jonah's, a food court-style dining facility. In addition, the facility includes ample indoor and outdoor seating.





year of the environment

Virginia Commonwealth University's
yearlong initiative highlights student
commitment to sustainable living

by Erin Egan

Last fall, the Virginia Commonwealth University campus hummed with environmentally friendly activity. Students participated in a "paint a recycling Dumpster" art project to spruce up the unsightly receptacles. They "dove" into 2.5 tons of trash unloaded from a Dumpster to evaluate what could have been recycled. They held a festival to educate the university and the surrounding community on how to live more sustainably. The events were part of the Year of the Environment initiative launched in October, continuing VCU's commitment to becoming a greener university.

In April 2008, VCU became one of more than 600 universities to sign the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment, pledging to neutralize greenhouse gases emitted on their campuses. VCU put forth the goal of reaching carbon neutrality by 2050.

Eight months later, then-Gov. Tim Kaine launched Renew Virginia, a yearlong series of legislative and administrative actions promoting renewable energy, creating green jobs and encouraging preservation of the environment.

Modeled after the governor's proposal, VCU's Year of the Environment project emphasizes the contributions and leadership that universities can bring to further improve Virginia's sustainable practices and the impact on natural resources.

These actions proved welcome to VCU undergraduates with a passion for environmental causes including those in the Monroe Park Campus Student Government Association, Green Unity for VCU and numerous other student organizations who have quietly worked to educate students, faculty, staff and the VCU community about the need to live more sustainably. In fact, the SGA urged the VCU administration to sign the climate commitment, acknowledging that while the university was making great strides toward becoming greener, more change was needed.

"The research and the facts are out," says Roberto Celis, a senior double majoring in psychology and craft and material studies, and vice president of the SGA. "We can't live like this for much longer."

VCU earns high marks for green building when it comes to new construction (See "Green report card" Page 15). The university's two recreational centers, the Molecular Medicine Research Building, the School of Dentistry's W. Baxter Perkinson, Jr. Building, and the School of Engineering's new Health and Life Sciences Laboratory earned silver certification as outlined by the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards. In October, the council awarded the Walter L. Rice Education Building at the VCU Rice Center platinum certification, the highest sustainability rating possible, and it became the first building in Virginia honored with the distinction.

Across VCU's Monroe Park Campus and MCV Campus, additional efforts to conserve energy and reduce emissions thrive, including the use of electric trucks by VCU Facilities Management; housekeeping's use of green, citrus-based cleaning products and recycled towels; the retrofitting of electronic equipment throughout the university to energy-savings standards; annual participation in the national RecycleMania program; the wholesale recycling of electronic equipment, wood, paper and aluminum products; plumbing upgrades for saving water; and installation of a solar water heater in Ginter House and solar trash compactors in Shafer Court Dining Center and Stuart C. Siegel Center. The MCV Campus Steam Plant boasts solar panels and new stack "scrubbers" that remove particulate from the stack effluent, as well as meters to measure steam flow and usage in the facility's three boilers, resulting in a recovery of \$1.25 million in yearly steam billings.



"The university is really looking at everything it can to reduce, reuse and recycle. It's amazing what's happening here."

– Roberto Celis, senior



Green Unity for VCU members host kids from Carver Elementary School at the student kickoff for VCU's Year of the Environment initiative.





Green Unity members
“can begin to see
that their actions
do have an impact
on improving
the world.”

– J. Clifford Fox, Ph.D., J.D.

“VCU is doing a lot already,” Celis says. “The university is really looking at everything it can to reduce, reuse and recycle. It’s amazing what’s happening here.”

A future project on the SGA’s radar involves the installation of a green roof on top of the Pollak Building by the end of this year. A section of the roof would hold containers filled with different types of plants and vegetation sponsored by student organizations or schools. The proceeds from the plant yield could be donated to the community or funneled back to its benefactor.

“We’re trying to find ways to promote VCU as an urban university,” Celis says. “What can we do that most universities can’t? A green roof is one answer.”

United for a cause

Amanda Schutt, a senior environmental studies major and executive officer for Green Unity, a student organization devoted to promoting environmental awareness and education, firmly believes in VCU’s Year of the Environment initiative. But she and her fellow Green Unity members like to say that every year is the year of the environment.

For more than two years, Green Unity and its 30 dedicated members have collaborated with various departments and student organizations across the university to relay the message of how to be more environmentally aware and to make a positive impact.

The group keeps its focus on activities and projects rooted around VCU and the Richmond area.

“We’re trying to make changes that are visible to students on campus,” Schutt says. “That way they learn more about the environmental movement.

Hopefully, if they see the change while they’re here, they’ll carry it on after they leave.”

Every few weeks during the year, the group organizes street cleanups, removing garbage from neighborhoods surrounding VCU. After the streets are free of trash and debris, the Student Gardening Club follows behind and plants “seed bombs,” compressed soil filled with live vegetation, in the newly cleaned dirt.

Green Unity gets support from the VCU Center for Environmental Studies and specifically from J. Clifford Fox, Ph.D., J.D., the center’s assistant director. In 15 years of teaching at VCU, he has seen student environmental groups come and go. Fox says he’s impressed with Green Unity because “they have every intention of being here after the Year of the Environment. This is a group that started before any of this came about,” he says. “They are able to take the Year of the Environment and run with it because they were already organized and ready to go.”

Fox offers advice to Green Unity members and introduces them to administrators who can help them realize their ideas. “It’s been incredibly positive to see how people in the leadership positions at the university have supported all of this,” Fox says. “We call and they’re there.”

Last November, Green Unity teamed with the SGA, which provided \$8,000 worth of funding, to host a student kickoff for the Year of the Environment. More than 400 students buzzed around the University Student Commons plaza, divided into four quadrants each representing one season of the year. The winter quarter highlighted energy conservation, spring focused on gardening, fall presented the theme of eating in season and summer demonstrated recreational activities and transportation. Several university departments as well as outside vendors and student organizations set up demonstrations to inform university and community participants about recycling, eating locally grown foods and being energy efficient. Attendees participated in environmentally themed games such as “guess the number of cigarette butts” collected from a recent street cleanup (more than 5,000!) and “recyclables” bowling with tin cans. Apples provided by VCU Dining Services helped 50 students from neighboring Carver Elementary School learn how to compost.

Fox called the event a huge success and says he found the interaction between members of Green Unity and the Carver schoolchildren very powerful. “Green Unity is bringing a love

of environment home personally," he says. "They can begin to see that their actions do have an impact on improving the world."

Elle Chang, a senior international studies and political science major and executive officer for Green Unity, expressed delight in the event's turnout and expected students to leave with a new perspective. "I hope they learned that all the little things they can change in their daily lives can help the environment in the future," she says.

Planned for the future

Next on the agenda for Green Unity is a two-pronged and more complex project called Gardens for Life. Working with VCU Facilities Management, members plan to install bayscaping along the Eugene P. and Lois E. Trani Center for Life Sciences building on Cary Street. Bayscaping involves using native plants that require less water, fertilizer and pesticides, thus reducing maintenance. Green Unity, again with help from Facilities Management, will dig up the existing plants and a local landscape artist will assist in making the design aesthetically pleasing. The second part of the project involves creating a rain garden in the grassy courtyard between the Life Sciences building and the School of Education wing of Oliver Hall. The rain garden will collect and treat storm water runoff from the building rather than it flowing into the city's sewers. Members of Green Unity met with Draper Aden Associates, a local consulting and civil engineering firm that will act as an adviser for the plan.

Green Unity hopes these garden projects will not only beautify VCU's Monroe Park Campus but also will offer future learning opportunities for its students. Fox says that understanding allows the group to accomplish so much. "They recognize that all this has to be educational," he says.

The group's next big university-wide event comes April 22, when it will host Earth Day for the second year in a row. Members want to expand the previously daylong festival to a weeklong celebration filled with activities. After the success of the Year of the Environment kickoff, expectations will be high, but Green Unity looks forward to the challenge.

"We want to tell students, this is what your university is doing," Schutt says. "These are priorities. It's the right thing to do, really."

Bayscapes on campus >> To make a gift to the bayscaping project, visit www.vcuf.org/giving, select the "General donation form" and then the "Rice Center for Environmental Life Sciences" as the donor designation. Or send a check made payable to the VCU Foundation c/o Catherine Dahl, director of development, VCU Life Sciences, 1000 W. Cary St., Suite 111, Richmond, VA 23284.

Erin Egan is a contributing writer for Shafer Court Connections.

Green report card

The Sustainable Endowments Institute named VCU a Campus Sustainability Leader, improving its "green report card" grade from a B- to a B. Of more than 300 universities rated, only 80 have earned the distinction of Campus Sustainability Leader.

Green report card for VCU

CATEGORY	2008	2009	2010
Overall grade	C-	B-	B
Administration	D	B	A
Climate change and energy	D	B	A
Endowment transparency	C	B	A
Food and recycling	C	A	A
Green building	C	B	A
Investment priorities	B	B	B
Shareholder engagement	C	C	B
Student involvement	F	F	F
Transportation	*	B	B

*Not applicable

Green report card for Virginia universities

SCHOOL	2010 overall grade
Virginia Commonwealth University	B
College of William and Mary	B
University of Richmond	B
Virginia Tech	B
University of Mary Washington	B-
University of Virginia	B-
Washington and Lee University	C+
Old Dominion University	C
Radford University	C
Regent University	C
Hampton University	C-
Virginia Military Institute	D+
	D-



Members of Green Unity for VCU promote environmental awareness and education to the university and surrounding community.



Building Opportunity

By Melanie Irvin Solaimani

Alumni associations launch campaign to raise \$50 million for student scholarships

Catherine K. Flint (B.S. '78/B) always thought about joining the Virginia Commonwealth University Alumni Association. Living in Ashland, Va., and coming downtown often, she says she maintains some connection with VCU.

"Joining has been something I've meant to do for years — but there always seemed to be something else that I needed to write a check for instead," she says.

As her twin daughters, Angela and Alison, started to consider colleges, Catherine decided the time was right to write that check. Now she's glad she did.

Angela, a freshman in the School of Education, won the VCU Alumni Association's Legacy Scholarship, which is awarded to a child or grandchild of a dues-paying member.

"I didn't believe it. I'm pretty sure I cried because it meant a lot to me to have won this scholarship," Angela says.

With two daughters in college, a son in high school and a recently retired husband, Catherine welcomed the financial assistance.

"It was a huge help. It was overwhelming in August when we were ordering books — I thought it would never end. Now Angela is talking about taking a class over winter break. Instead of saying, 'No, we can't get the tuition together,' I was able to say, 'No problem.' That's a really nice feeling," she says.

The Flints are like a lot of VCU families, who struggle to finance higher education.

About 70 percent of VCU's entering full-time freshmen apply for need-based financial aid. Only 11 percent, or 187, of those students with financial need have that need fully met. On average, VCU undergraduates receive \$10,685 in financial aid. All forms of financial aid for VCU students exceed \$270 million. Additionally, 70 percent work full or part time.

The university is struggling to make ends meet, too, as the cost of higher education continues to rise and the amount of support VCU receives from the state continues to decline. This year, VCU will receive \$25.4 million less state support than it did in fiscal year 2000, despite enrolling nearly 9,000 more students.

Leaders of the VCU Alumni Association and the MCV Alumni Association of VCU looked at those staggering statistics and decided to take action. In November, the associations announced Opportunity VCU, a campaign to raise \$50 million for undergraduate and graduate scholarships and graduate fellowships.

"Alumni frequently tell us that without the opportunities VCU provided, they might never have earned a college degree. Now, alumni can provide assistance to the students of today and tomorrow by supporting the Opportunity VCU scholarship campaign," says **Donna Dalton** (M.Ed. '00/E) president of the VCU Alumni Association. "I encourage all alumni to help students achieve these dreams by making a scholarship gift. Remember, even small gifts make a big difference. You can make a five-year commitment and pay your gift off over time."

"I also encourage you to personally call on five other VCU alumni and ask them to follow in your generous footsteps."

The associations are collaborating with the schools and departments across both campuses to reach this goal. All of the university's schools are participating in Opportunity VCU in addition to their ongoing annual and capital fundraising priorities. Gifts can be designated for a specific school or department; to the Opportunity VCU fund, a university-wide scholarship fund; or to the alumni associations' scholarship funds.

"Scholarships not only help deserving students fund their college education, but they also help the university attract and retain the most motivated students," says Michael Rao, Ph.D., VCU president. "As VCU continues to strengthen its reputation as a leading research university, the caliber of our students will excel as well. Our alumni of today and tomorrow will benefit as the value of their degrees ascends."

Angela, who's adjusting to her classes, working part time and planning to join the new Students Today Alumni Tomorrow student group, hopes she can do her part to help others like her in years to come.

"I absolutely love VCU. I don't think I could have picked a better college to go to school. College is expensive, and I think it would be a really good feeling to help someone else be able to go to VCU," she says. "I hope that after I have graduated, I will be able to contribute to scholarship funds even just a little bit."

And as the youngest Flint child eases closer to college (he's considering VCU, of course), Catherine is doubly grateful for the support — financial and otherwise — her family has received from the alumni association. She encourages alumni to consider giving back, too.

"If you can give anything, you would not believe how much you are helping. What might seem like an 'insignificant' amount to you can add up with other 'insignificant' amounts and be the answer to someone else's prayers," she says. "When we are done with all the college expenses — sometimes I feel it will never be done — I am going to give back."

To make a gift to the Opportunity VCU campaign, visit www.advancement.vcu.edu/opportunityvcu.

Melanie Irvin Solaimani (B.S. '96/MC) is a contributing writer for Shafer Court Connections.

With college expenses adding up for the Flint family, a Legacy Scholarship helps ease the financial worries for mom Catherine (center) and her twins, Angela (left) and Alison.





Seeing green:

VCU'S SUSTAINABILITY DIRECTOR EXPLAINS HOW
TO CREATE AN ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY CAMPUS

Jacek Ghosh, Virginia Commonwealth University's first director of sustainability, helps guide the university's green efforts. But he has a bigger goal in mind — to make his position obsolete.

"You know you're successful when you don't have to talk about sustainability," Ghosh says. "In some ways, if you work yourself out of a job, then you've made it in the DNA. I shouldn't have to be here; it should just be part of what we're doing."

In the meantime, he oversees VCU's sustainability initiatives. After signing the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment in April 2008 and hiring Ghosh later that year, VCU set its sights on achieving carbon neutrality — zero net greenhouse gas emissions — by 2050.

Ghosh recently sat down to talk about what it takes to make a college campus green.

What is the university's philosophy toward sustainability? We're currently working on the climate action plan, so we're looking at energy, transportation and on-campus dining as well as the curriculum, research and community engagement. All things on campus connect and are sustainable. Also, we're an educational institution. We are obviously educating people. We model behavior for our local community. If we can't figure out how to lead the way, then I'm not sure anybody will.

How is VCU setting the standard? In Virginia, we have the iconic Walter L. Rice Education Building at VCU's Rice Center, which is the first LEED platinum-level building in the state. We can also affect policy because Capitol Square is down the street. If nothing else, we get to see policy live and in action. I think climate change is also going to force curriculum and create different hybrid disciplines, and hopefully, the university will be on the leading edge of that. With our planning process and the small, logical things we've done, we're actually in the forefront. We're right there in the front of the pack.

What are VCU's biggest accomplishments?

I think signing the Presidents' Climate Commitment and having a climate action plan by May 2010 will be our big accomplishments, because that sets our path for the next 40 years. We're looking at how to decide what our footprint is, what growth we can expect and at what rate we need to reduce our output. Then we have to break that down into something that folks can understand and get everyone to change their behaviors, including myself.

A big piece is all of our buildings will be LEED silver or better. As we build new buildings, they won't produce energy, and we have 200 old buildings that will need to be more energy efficient. We've also had a recycling program that's been around for years, and we recently added exterior recycling containers that have been a big hit. Campus dining, which is a small piece of our greenhouse gas emissions, is becoming more sustainable. As a large commuting institution, we have to look at parking and traffic. We have lots of bicyclists and some people who ride mo-peds and scooters, but we still build parking garages and people want to park right where they work. We don't know all of the answers yet, but if we

start talking about them and put them in our plan, then we have the next 40 years to figure them out.

How can people get involved? Everybody likes to talk about green because this is the year — or maybe the decade — of being green. The VCU Sustainability Committee, with 45 people from a variety of departments, is active and coming up with suggestions and ideas to be implemented. There are always the logical things — use less paper, use less water, turn your lights off, turn your computer off — that we've heard about for the past 10 years but are harder to do in practice. You have to think that the issue is large enough to think about saving. At a place that you work, it's not your home and it's someone else's money. But in the end it isn't anybody else's environment — it's all ours. If we don't take care of it, it doesn't matter who you are, you're going to feel the repercussions of it.

Interview conducted by Kim Witt, a contributing writer for Shafer Court Connections.

To learn more about VCU's sustainability efforts, visit www.vcugoesgreen.vcu.edu.

Richmond CenterStage

New performing arts complex opens its doors, attracting acts from 'around the world and around the corner'

By Polly Roberts

Anticipation and excitement filled the air in downtown Richmond on the evening of Sept. 12, 2009, as a sold-out crowd packed the 1,800-seat Carpenter Theatre to celebrate the grand opening of Richmond CenterStage, the city's new 179,000-square-foot performing arts complex on Broad Street.

"There was just this aura of expectation — a whole renewal of the spirit of downtown," says **Dorothy Pauley** (B.A. '74/H&S), CenterStage Foundation board of directors member and namesake for part of the complex.

The opening of CenterStage signaled the completion of the Carpenter Theatre's long-anticipated renovation, as well as three new venues housed in Dorothy Pauley Square: the Gottwald Playhouse, Rhythm Hall and the Showcase Gallery.

Jay Smith, CenterStage spokesman, says the complex's vision began in September 2001 when local business leaders realized the potential for the downtown corridor between Sixth and Seventh streets, and Broad and Grace streets. They formed the foundation to start fundraising, planning and development — successfully collaborating with the city

of Richmond on the project (Richmond owns the Carpenter Theatre; CenterStage Foundation owns the venues in Dorothy Pauley Square).

When determining what to include in the complex, Smith says, the foundation asked two questions: What does the local community want and what do the different arts groups in Richmond need?

The result: a combination of large and small venues that can draw national acts (think magician David Copperfield and Broadway's "Avenue Q") and provide nine resident production groups (including the Richmond Ballet and Virginia Opera) with space to perform and practice.

"We wanted to attract acts from around the world and around the corner," Smith says.

The refurbished Carpenter Theatre boasts comfortable seats, state-of-the-art acoustics and brilliant lighting, including newly installed fiber-optic stars twinkling overhead in the repainted midnight sky ceiling — one of many preserved and enhanced elements of the theater's original 1929 design.

In Dorothy Pauley Square (the former Thalhimer building), the 200-seat Gottwald Playhouse features performance hall-quality

acoustics and a flexible seating pattern that provides patrons a full view of the stage area, while Rhythm Hall serves as a multipurpose space that can be used for rehearsals or can be set up in the spirit of a local jazz club to create a more intimate setting for a stand-up comedian or a blues band. The 1,500-square-foot Showcase Gallery displays visual arts that can be coordinated with First Fridays and other local art events.

"I really think CenterStage will be the flame that catches fire and all of Broad Street will become active again," Pauley says.

As a season-ticket holder, Pauley plans to do her part to support the arts. Now she hopes the surrounding community will do the same.

"The core of your area is so important, and we really want people to come downtown," Pauley says. "We're lucky to have something of this quality here in Richmond. The touring productions, the ballet, the symphony, the opera — all are first-rate. We've just got everything going for us here."

Polly Roberts is a contributing writer for Shafer Court Connections.

Richmond CenterStage welcomes local and national acts to the Carpenter Theatre and the three venues in Dorothy Pauley Square. The performing arts complex's September 2009 grand opening featured African American Repertory Theatre and City Dance Theatre performers, among others. For more information about CenterStage, visit www.richmondcenterstage.com.



THE BIG PICTURE

Virginia Commonwealth University students spend a spring day break dancing at the Shafer Court compass. Located between the James Branch Cabell Library, Hibbs Hall and the Shafer Court Dining Center, the compass marks the center of VCU's bustling Monroe Park Campus.





Focused *on* Success

VCU's yearlong core curriculum course enhances the student experience — one undergraduate at a time

By Erin Egan

Thomas McMullen never thought of himself as a particularly great student. He did OK in high school but says no teacher or class ever really challenged him. That changed in 2008-09 when he participated in Virginia Commonwealth University's yearlong Focused Inquiry course.

In his class of 22 students, McMullen blossomed. His FI instructor, Peter Henry, took him under his wing and encouraged McMullen to enter a personal essay he wrote for class in an annual FI writing contest. McMullen's piece, "Laughing with God," about being a stand-up comedian and a Muslim, won the contest and was published in "A Companion to Focused Inquiry," a compilation of FI student writing.

"I had never succeeded at anything like that," McMullen says. "It was a nice shift to go from the underachiever to really embracing the academic world."

Since his essay won the award and garnered such high praise, McMullen, now a junior, changed his major from art to English and serves as an undergraduate teaching assistant to Henry. "It's something I never thought I would be in a position to do," McMullen says. "It's one of my favorite aspects of going to school now."

McMullen credits Henry for sparking his interest in writing and mentoring him.

"In Focused Inquiry, it was the first time a professor really spoke to me as opposed to at me," he says. "The kind of rapport that developed is probably what kept me most engaged in class."

McMullen's experience illustrates exactly why the university introduced FI as part of its core curriculum in 2007: to enhance the student experience.

The process of instituting FI began in 2004, after VCU received its reaccreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. At that time, the university's Quality Enhancement Plan revolved around increasing student engagement. Simultaneously, the development of the VCU 2020 Strategic Plan laid out the vision for improving the university over the next 15 years.

Stephen D. Gottfredson, Ph.D., then dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences, enlisted the help of Joe Marolla, Ph.D., then director of the Center for Teaching Excellence, to examine how the university could better serve its students. Specifically, Gottfredson, now provost and vice president for academic affairs, asked Marolla what he would do to improve undergraduate education over the next 20 years.

"The provost was allowing me to think about the biggest picture," says Marolla, who now serves as vice provost for instruction, director of the CTE and acting dean of the University College.

Marolla dove into the existing literature. He investigated programs at large universities as well as small, elite liberal arts institutions. His research uncovered a common theme: All students should master certain abilities or skills before leaving college. Those skills include oral and written communication, critical thinking, information fluency, ethical and social responsibility, and quantitative literacy.

Marolla worked on a proposal for FI, a six-credit, two-semester sequence required of all first-year students that would provide the foundation of the core curriculum. Students would begin core shared experiences through a summer reading program followed by the FI sequence. Throughout the year, students would undertake similar assignments and projects inside and outside the classroom.

One stipulation of Marolla's FI proposal included faculty members hired specifically to teach the course. "I needed my own faculty who are not encumbered with research and other obligations," he says. "I needed people who love to teach and want to deal with the problems of freshmen."

The proposal was approved by Gottfredson and then-VCU President Eugene P. Trani, Ph.D., and remarkably Marolla received everything he requested. "I cannot even tell you how big that was," Marolla says. He brought in 41 faculty members in 2007. Since then, two more have joined the team.

One of the many people assisting Marolla on the project included Daphne Rankin, Ph.D., director of student engagement in the Office of the Vice Provost for Instruction. A veteran of more than 20 years of teaching at VCU, Rankin can barely contain her enthusiasm when she talks about FI, its faculty and its impact on students.

"The professors are very hands-on and the classroom is a learning-centered environment," she says. "We tell students that we are going to provide them with the facilities, the resources and the people to enhance their success, but the responsibility lies with them. We're here to facilitate their learning and to make their learning an adventure."

Kristin Reed, Ph.D., arrived at VCU from Indiana University in August 2009 to teach 85 students in four sections of FI. While at Indiana, she says she was often the only faculty member teaching a particular course. At VCU, Reed says she can draw support and get instant feedback from her fellow FI professors.

"I have almost 50 people teaching the same course who are taking different approaches," Reed says. "It gives me tons of stimulation as a teacher. I'm very fortunate to have such a big and interesting community of people to work with."

Reed says her students benefit from the small class size and get to know one another well because they interact with the same group for an entire year. She notices that students become extremely aware

that they are surrounded by people with whom they might not normally come in contact and that affects how they speak. This offers excellent training for real life, she says.

"The world is full of people who are radically different from us," Reed says. "Having that open discourse in the classroom makes them aware that those types of unexpected diversity are closer than they think, and that over time they can establish discourse with people who they previously thought they had nothing in common with."

Reports on the FI program's first two years indicate a substantial increase in university retention rates. In 2005, first-year student

“Our job is to be the university of opportunity that provides students with tools to be quality people in the long run.”

– Joe Marolla, Ph.D.

"Last year was the highest academic performance after the first semester of any class ever at VCU, so it shouldn't surprise people that retention was the highest it had ever been," Marolla says.

With more students returning to the university, the program paid for itself in two years. The success comes as no shock to Marolla, who knew failure was not an option. Now, the ongoing challenge will be to ensure that F1 engages future classes of undergraduate students and prepares them for life after VCU.

"Our job is to be the university of opportunity that provides students with tools to be quality people in the long run," Marolla says. "That's what this is about."

Erin Egan is a contributing writer for Shafer Court Connections.



Finding Love

By Kelli Anderson

Pair fall in love as VCU students more than 30 years ago

In 1978, art major Robin Croft (B.F.A. '80/A) found inspiration in the Department of Painting and Printmaking administrative office. Her name was Cathy Senkow (B.S. '80/H&S).

"It was a really small office, and we had the doors open all the time so he just came in and out," says Cathy, a math major who worked in the office as a student typist. "My first impression of Robin was he seemed friendly."

While pretending he needed to talk with department secretary Nancy Robinson, Robin admits his frequent visits to the office were to see Cathy.

"I went into the office to flirt with her because she had pretty legs," Robin says. "I noticed her eyes first but back then in the late '70s she was always wearing skirts."

Finally, during the last week of spring semester classes, Robin mustered the courage to ask Cathy for a date when they returned to campus in the fall. The pair agreed to catch up in August when classes resumed. That summer, Robin headed back to his home in South Hill, Va., while Cathy traveled north to Falls Church, Va.

When the two returned to Richmond, Cathy changed jobs and started working as a waitress but remained connected with Robinson in the painting and printmaking department. She hadn't forgotten about Robin or their future date and decided to leave a card with Robinson, hoping he'd look for her.

"I saw this card in the store and thought it would be really cute to make," Cathy says. "It had little coupons on the edge of the card that you could tear off, and each coupon was redeemable for a kiss."

Her creativity paid off. Robin arrived at her off-campus apartment one day unannounced, card in hand.

Share Your Story

Did you meet your significant other at VCU? Share your story and connect with other graduates on the VCU Alumni Association Facebook page at www.facebook.com/vculumni.

"When I got out of my car, I saw Cathy taking her bike into her apartment and I went over to hold the door for her," Robin says. "She just went on in without recognizing me so I had to go in after her."

It didn't take long for Cathy to make the connection between the man who flirted with her last semester and the man holding her door.

"He had a Panama hat on and I thought he was really cute, but I didn't realize I knew him."

Cathy giggles as she remembers Robin redeeming his coupon right there on the steps of her Hanover Avenue apartment. Without wasting any more time, they held their first date that night, watching the television show, "Star Trek."

"The card worked," Cathy says.

The couple spent the next two years studying at VCU and hanging out off campus at N.Y. Deli — one of their favorite places in Carytown — and on campus in the Hibbs Building on Friday nights.

"We went to the free movie nights and watched a lot of classic movies," Robin says.

After graduation the couple moved to Northern Virginia and married Nov. 15, 1980, in Alexandria. Cathy (now Cathy Croft) owns a family law practice while Robin works at the Lorton Arts Foundation and creates art such as wall hangings, sculptures and drawings in his home studio.

Now, 29 years later, Robin and Cathy make regular trips to VCU, visiting their eldest daughter, Carly, a second-year honors student studying criminal justice.

"We always loved VCU because it's in the city, and students are still in the real world even though they are in college," Cathy says.

"Carly is a very decisive person and only wanted to go to our alma mater."

Cathy hopes that Carly's time as a VCU student provides some of the same excitement and love that hers did.

"Some of our best memories are from our time at VCU and living in Richmond," she says.

Kelli Anderson is a contributing writer for Shafer Court Connections.



A handmade card (left) sparks a relationship between Cathy and Robin Croft, who married Nov. 15, 1980.

The World ... brought to you by the VCU Alumni Association

2010-11 Travel Destinations



2010 Trips

Aug. 6-14	Paris and London (via Eurostar train)
Aug. 25-Sept. 3	Canadian Maritimes
Aug. 29-Sept. 22	Grand Journey Around the World
Sept. 8-16	Tuscany-Cortona
Sept. 12-20	Ancient Greece and Turkey Island Life Cruise
Oct. 17-30	Mediterranean Inspiration Cruise
Nov. 26-Dec. 4	Holiday Markets on the Danube

VCU Alumni Association
Virginia Commonwealth University

2011 Trips (final dates pending)

January-March	Israel
January-March	Insider's Perspective: Rome
February-March	Cruise the Panama Canal: Leeward Islands to Caldera
March	Mysteries of the Mekong River: Angkor Wat to Saigon
March	Mayan Mystique Cruise
March	Asian Explorations Cruise
March	Caribbean Pearls Cruise
April	Historic Reflections Cruise: Athens to Barcelona
April	Passage to Panama: Key West to San Francisco
April-May	China, Tibet and Yangtze River Cruise

For more information, call (804) 828-2586 or visit www.vcu-mcvalumni.org/travel

Alumni Connections

News, highlights and event photos from the
Virginia Commonwealth University Alumni Association.

VCU alumni volunteers take part in HandsOn community projects

On Oct. 17, nearly 100 VCU alumni volunteered their time with one of more than 40 community projects organized by HandsOn Greater Richmond. The effort was part of the VCU Alumni Association's new service initiative, Service to Community and VCU, which is designed to mobilize the strength and talent of 140,000 VCU alumni in a broad and concerted dedication to community service.

The VCU Alumni Association announced the new effort Sept. 11 in recognition of the National Day of Service and Remembrance. The alumni association hopes to inspire and motivate the VCU alumni community, including more than 50,000 people in the Richmond area, to make a collective push to participate in community-service projects.

Rams Alumni Volunteer Network

The Rams Alumni Volunteer Network, or RAVN, provides an outlet for Richmond-area alumni to volunteer on behalf of the VCU Alumni Association. RAVN supports the alumni association's service initiatives in addition to exploring other community volunteer opportunities. All alumni are welcome to participate. To learn how you can get involved, contact Larry Powell, assistant director of the VCU Alumni Association, at lpowell@vcu.edu.

Athena Parker, volunteer engagement coordinator with AmeriCorps VISTA for HandsOn, says that one day of volunteering made a huge impact. In total, about 1,000 volunteers gave 4,000 hours of service — a value of \$83,000 to the community.

The majority of VCUAA members assisted with a cleanup project at Richmond Community High School.

"The VCU HandsOn Day project at Richmond Community High School was a phenomenal success. The landscaping that was done on the front of the building enhances the beauty of this neoclassic building. Most importantly, the cleaning out of the greenhouse enables the school to make it a full-production facility," says Principal **Thomas H. Beatty, Ed.D.** (B.A. '93/H&S), also secretary of the VCU Alumni Association board of directors and a member of the board's Service to Community and VCU Committee. "The greenhouse will be used to provide real-life experiences for our science classes, and it will serve as a production facility to provide plants for the Cannon Creek Greenway that runs near the school."

The VCU Alumni Association is working with the VCU Division of Community Engagement in support of the Caring to Act initiative to encourage VCU alumni, staff, faculty and students to participate in structured volunteer activities that address critical community needs.

A number of projects are in development. For more information, visit the Support and Get Involved section of the VCU Alumni Association Web site at www.vcu-mcvalumni.org.



Benefit spotlight: Online Journals Access

If you're conducting research or looking for interesting articles on a specific topic, check out Online Journals Access by EBSCO Host. Available as an exclusive member benefit via the alumni association Web site, Online Journals Access connects you to more than 8,200 academic journals and reports (more than 3,350 are full-text) and 1,450 business magazines.

All site-registered, dues-paying alumni association members can get direct access to the databases. You can even view the complete list of publications included in the database before registering to use the site or becoming a member. Go to www.vcu-mcvalumni.org, select "Benefits & Services" and click on "Online Journals Access."



Richmond-area receptions welcome the Raos to VCU

More than 600 alumni and guests attended five Richmond-area receptions last fall to welcome new VCU President Michael Rao, Ph.D., and his wife, Monica, to campus. The Raos talked with alumni one-on-one, and Dr. Rao shared his vision for the future. He urged alumni to re-engage with their alma mater and called on them to participate in the Opportunity VCU campaign to raise \$50 million for student scholarships and fellowships. (To read more about this university-wide campaign, see Page 16.)

In October, the Raos met alumni association board members at the Scott House. The crowd of 125 also included former board members of the VCU Alumni Association and the MCV Alumni Association of VCU. This annual event keeps former board members in touch with the university and provides updates on alumni association initiatives.



VCU President Michael Rao, Ph.D., (left) and his wife, Monica, enjoy meeting community members during a reception at Willow Oaks Country Club. All alumni in the greater Richmond area were invited to meet VCU's new president at a series of events last fall.

Mark your calendars for Reunion Weekend

The 2010 Richmond Professional Institute and African-American Alumni Council reunions are scheduled for April 23-25. Check the VCU Alumni Association Web site regularly for Reunion Weekend updates: www.vcu-mcvalumni.org.

Association recognizes freshman scholarship winners

The VCU Alumni Association sponsored the Freshman Scholars' Barbecue Oct. 24, during Fall Fest. The event was attended by more than 220 freshmen, parents and guests. All of the invited students had received a Presidential, Provost or Deans' scholarship. VCUAA board member **James Williams** (B.S. '84/H&S; M.S. '86/H&S) spoke about his years at VCU.

Williams received one of the first Presidential scholarships ever awarded. Emcee and VCUAA board member **Aaron Gilchrist** (B.S. '03/MC) and VCUAA President **Donna Dalton** (M.Ed. '00/E) led a VCU trivia contest with questions for both parents and students. Everyone enjoyed music, photos, fun and, of course, the barbecue.

VCU Alumni Month is for you!

Mark your calendars now to come back to campus to attend one or more of the many events and activities scheduled for April at VCU.

Join in the fun and learning at lectures, forums, bike rides, community-service projects, presentations, receptions, dinners, dedications and other social activities – all spread throughout the month.

If you haven't been back to campus recently, this is the perfect opportunity.

To learn more about the Alumni Month events listed below, or for a complete calendar, visit www.vcu-mcvalumni.org/alumnimonth.

April 1

Virginia Communications Hall of Fame - School of Mass Communications

April 10

Rams Night Out – VCU Young Alumni Council

VCU Intercultural Festival

April 15

William E. and Miriam S. Blake Lecture in History of Christianity – College of Humanities and Sciences

April 23

Reunion Weekend

Richard T. Robertson Alumni House 10-year anniversary

April 24

Bike ride to Osborne Landing - VCU Cycling Club

Henry H. Hibbs and Margaret L. Johnson Plaza Dedication

Resume Writing and Interviewing Presentation

Careerbeam and Online Journals Demonstration

Using Social Media for Marketing

April 30

Alumni Night at The Diamond: Richmond Flying Squirrels

vs. Bowie Baysox



Freshman scholars and their families attend a dinner in their honor. The VCU Alumni Association sponsors the annual event held during the university's Fall Fest.



Life at Virginia Commonwealth University instills in students a diverse range of views and results in alumni who apply street-smart solutions to local and global challenges. Joining the alumni association helps to enrich the VCU experience and provides for a lifetime connection with the university and fellow alumni. **We create change. We move the needle. We make a dent.**

Join today! www.vcu-mcvalumni.org • (804) 828-2586

Virginia Commonwealth University

VCU.edu

Affiliate news

Hampton Roads alumni help at the holidays

Hampton Roads Alumni Chapter members participated in several service initiatives during the 2009 holiday season. The chapter adopted an elderly foster parent of five pre-teen and teenage children by sponsoring their family's Thanksgiving Day meal. The chapter also provided Christmas gifts for 10 Angel Tree children in the Hampton Roads area.

VCU Graduates that live in Hampton Roads who would like to join the chapter may contact **Alfye Ingram** (B.S. '89/H&S) or **Pamela McKinney** (B.A. '00/A) at vcuhamptonroadsalumni@gmail.com.

RPI Council establishes heritage campaign

The Richmond Professional Institute Alumni Council launched the RPI Heritage Campaign to raise \$200,000 for a scholarship. Through this campaign, donors can name historic spaces in Ginter House. Known as the "Ad Building" by many RPI alumni, the house was the administration and student life center for the institute.

"Alumni who attended RPI in the '30s, '40s or '50s will especially remember 'The Slop Shop,' the little snack shop in the basement," says RPI alumnus **Bob Lindholm** (B.S. '50/H&S). "There was a counter on the left as you entered, a jukebox and a few booths against the wall, almost always filled with students. The official name was RPI Book Store and Coffee Shop, but to many it was 'The Slop Shop.'"

Donors will be recognized with plaques mounted in Ginter House. In addition, their names will be added to the Book of Honor in the RPI archives.

To make a tax-deductible contribution, contact Gordon A. McDougall, assistant vice president, University Alumni Relations, at gamedougall@vcu.edu.

S.C., Va. and D.C. chapters need your voice

Do you live in Charleston, S.C., Northern Virginia or D.C.?

The VCU Alumni Association wants to hear from alumni in the Charleston, S.C.,

area who are interested in forming an alumni chapter. We're also exploring restructuring the Northern Virginia/Washington-area alumni chapter by developing several smaller, regional groups.

If you're interested in these chapters, contact Larry Powell, assistant director of the VCU Alumni Association, at wlpowell@vcu.edu.

AAAC seeks nominees for officer positions

The African-American Alumni Council will hold elections this spring to fill the expiring terms of its president and secretary. Officers will serve a two-year term from July 2010 to June 2012 and must be active members of the VCU Alumni Association.

If you're interested in serving as part of the council's leadership, contact Larry Powell at wlpowell@vcu.edu.

STAT connects students, alumni

A new student organization sponsored by the VCU Alumni Association gives current VCU students opportunities to get involved. Students Today Alumni Tomorrow, or STAT, facilitates interaction between students and alumni and enhances the student experience by providing opportunities that strengthen lifelong loyalty to VCU.

STAT lets students connect with the alumni association before graduation while providing leadership opportunities through the board and offers students free members-only goodies and rewards.

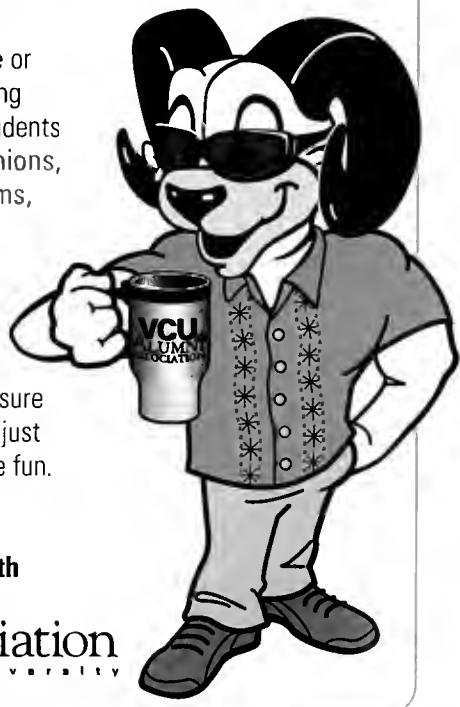
In its first few months, STAT signed up 69 members who have helped at various alumni association events, including the SunTrust Richmond Marathon, the Richmond-area receptions with VCU President Michael Rao, Ph.D., and his wife, Monica, and the HandsOn Day community-service effort.

April is VCU Alumni Month

Mark your calendars now to attend one or more events and activities scheduled during VCU Alumni Month. Join faculty, staff, students and alumni in the fun and learning at reunions, receptions, dinners, dedications, forums, lectures, community & university service projects and other social & spirit activities – all spread out throughout the month.

VCU Alumni Month is for you! You are sure to find activities that will be of interest or just meet up with old friends. Come join all the fun.

To learn more, visit our Web site at
www.vcu-mcvalumni.org/alumnimonth



VCU Alumni Association
Virginia Commonwealth University

Class notes

Updates

1970s

Patricia C. Hassard (M.S. '79/MC) was awarded the Silver Certificate at the 62nd Virginia Public Relations Awards Ceremony, hosted by the Richmond Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America. She received the award for the 2008-09 marketing campaign she developed and implemented for MercerTrigiani, a regional real estate law firm located in Alexandria, Va.

Paul D. McWhinney* (B.S. '74/SW; M.S.W. '79/SW) was selected for alumni membership in Phi Kappa Phi. In addition to his role as director of family services for the Commonwealth of Virginia, he is a field instructor for the VCU School of Social Work, supervising undergraduate and graduate students in their internships.

Laura Candler White (B.M. '78/A) performed at the VCU alumni board's first alumni recital.

Robert P. Wiedemer* (B.S. '70/B; M.S. '73/B) retired after 35 years of service with the Virginia state government as a state corporation tax auditor, systems analyst and information systems audit manager.

Dave Williamson (M.F.A. '76/A) and **Roberta Williamson** (M.F.A. '76/A) were in the Peabody Award-winning PBS documentary "Craft in America." Hillary Rodham Clinton, Robin Williams, Bill Murray, Warren Buffett and Carol Burnett are collectors of their jewelry.

1980s

Lisa Edwards Burrs (B.M. '84/A, M.M. '84/A) performed at the VCU alumni board's first alumni recital.

Kristina "Tina" Kendall (B.S. '84/B) is assistant director of internal audit for the Virginia Department of Transportation.

John Lawson (M.A. '87/H&S) received the Ethel Fortner Award for his work in poetry and community service. Lawson published his first collection of poetry, "Generations," in 2007.

Gary Shaver (B.M.E. '83/A) contributed his talents on piano, flute and vocals, and several original songs, to an evening of music at the VOCAL Songwriters Showcase in Richmond, Va.

Jesse Vaughan Jr. (B.S. '80/MC), who has worked at major companies such as HBO, Warner Brothers, Atlantic Records, Sony Records, NBC, FOX and ABC News, is now executive producer for Northern Arizona University Television Services. Vaughan worked with NAU students and staff to produce the documentary "Spoken Word," which combines poetry, music and film clips on contemporary issues and was nominated for four Emmy awards from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences' Rocky Mountain/Southwest chapter.

1990s

Victor Goines (M.M. '90/A) performed clarinet before a crowd of 10,000 at the Benny Goodman centennial concert in Chicago.

2000s

Melanie Payne Bolas (B.M. '01/A), a music teacher at Chancellor Elementary School in Fredericksburg, Va., was awarded a \$2,000 grant for her third-grade students to attend the National Symphony's Sounds Historic Young People's Concert, which fosters connections between music and history.

Tina Boy (B.F.A. '07/A) exhibited her work at the "Core Show" at Penland in North Carolina and

Send information about your professional and personal accomplishments to shafercourt@vcu.edu. Or, mail your news to Shafer Court Connections, Virginia Commonwealth University, 924 W. Franklin St., P.O. Box 843044, Richmond, VA 23284-3044.

Spotlight

Teacher promotes college – and VCU pride – to his students

To join the KIPP – Knowledge Is Power Program – national network of charter schools, middle school science teacher **Josh Elder** (M.Ed. '08/E) relocated to Philadelphia in June 2009 and quickly adjusted to a new city and a new job.

Elder arrives at the KIPP Philadelphia Charter School by 7 a.m. to begin his often 12-hour day. Because many students come to the school two or three grade levels behind, the hours and the academic year stretch longer than at a typical school. "Our hope is that by the time students leave us in eighth grade, we've brought them up to grade level or above grade level," Elder says.

KIPP schools promote higher education to their students from the beginning. Teachers decorate their classrooms with memorabilia from their alma mater as a constant reminder to students that college is an attainable goal. To gather items to deck out his classroom, Elder wrote a letter to Beverly Warren, Ed.D., Ph.D., dean of the School of Education at Virginia Commonwealth University, and his former professors and asked if they could donate VCU gear. Elder received several care packages, including from the education school and the VCU Alumni Association.

"I was just amazed at how much people sent me," he says. "The kids love having something with their homecoming name on it."

The association with VCU gives his students – referred to as VCU Rams – pride and ownership in their home room, Elder says. They want their home room to have the highest grades or highest total of merits for the week, he adds.

Acclimating to his new, grueling schedule took some time, but Elder enjoys the constant challenge of working in a charter school environment.

"It has really rejuvenated my interest in teaching because every day is different," he says. "There's always something new going on."



Josh Elder and his students sport their VCU pride at KIPP Philadelphia Charter School.

was featured at the "Women in Wood" exhibit at Arrowmont in Tennessee.

Jackie Brown (M.F.A. '08/A) had work featured at the Shore Institute of Contemporary Art's Sixth Annual International Juried Exhibition in Long Branch, N.J. She teaches sculpture at Ursinus College in Collegeville, Pa., and was offered a solo exhibit at the Clay Studio in Philadelphia.

John Bullard (B.M. '05/A) released "Scales and Arpeggios for Classical Banjo" with Mel Bay Publications.

Elaine Butcher (B.F.A. '09/A) had work at a Studio Gallery Jason McLeod exhibit in Charlottesville, Va.

Gabriel Craig (M.F.A. '09/A) spoke at VCU's 17th Annual Symposium on Architectural History and the Decorative Arts at the Virginia Historical Society and presented his research on early American arts and crafts and wrought ironwork. Craig was also a visiting artist at the Savannah College of Art and Design and participated concurrently in the "Making Meaning in the Marketplace" symposia sponsored by the American

Spotlight

VCU experience benefits alumna in her new government post

Carmen Nazario (M.S.W. '73/SW) enrolled in the Master of Social Work program at Virginia Commonwealth University in 1972 when her husband, a pilot with the U.S. Air Force, was stationed at Langley Air Force Base. She recalls her arrival at VCU as a serendipitous event that ultimately became transformational.

"The dynamic circumstances of the times gave me the opportunity to find my voice and express myself as a leader, as an advocate and as a commenter on the social conditions of both the student body and the larger community," Nazario says.

One memorable experience included fieldwork at Beth Shalom Home for elderly Jewish residents in Richmond, Va. Until then, Nazario, a Roman Catholic from Bayamón, Puerto Rico, had never experienced Jewish traditions.

"My time there was an eye-opening culture shock because it was my first real exposure to different religious beliefs and practices," she says. "Through genuine expressions of care and concern, we were able to bridge that cultural divide."

After graduating from VCU, Nazario worked in human services in private and non-profit sectors as well as at every level of government, including two appointments in President Bill Clinton's administration. Her VCU experience, she says, helped her develop the skill to embrace people from all walks of life and provided a solid foundation in the principles that continue to guide her.

From 2003 to 2008, Nazario served as administrator of the Administration for Children and Families for the commonwealth of Puerto Rico, where she led an agency of 4,000 staff with a budget of more than \$225 million. Next, she worked as an assistant professor at the Inter American University of Puerto Rico, where she taught social policy and coordinated the social work practicum at the School of Social Work.

In September 2009, the U.S. Senate unanimously confirmed Nazario as assistant secretary for children and families. As assistant secretary, she oversees the Administration for Children and Families within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In her more than 40-year career, Nazario calls this position a social worker's dream.

"I can influence the lives of children, youth and families who are at risk of the social ill that I was trained to ameliorate," she says. "Whether my leadership is exercised in child welfare, early childhood education, services to communities or support of low-income families, the opportunity to make lasting improvements in the quality of life for millions of people is truly a privilege."



Carmen Nazario calls her time at VCU "transformational."

Craft Council. He was recently hired as an adjunct faculty member in the Metals Department at Houston Community College, the largest public school in Texas.

John Crandall (M.F.A. '91/H&D) completed his M.B.A. and is the head coach for Syracuse University's Wrestling Club.

Dana Dabney (M.F.A. '91/H&D) teaches the crafts class at Varina High School in Henrico County, Va.

Alissa Davis (M.F.A. '91/H&D) published a review in *Whitehot* on Roxy Paine.

Mike DiBella (M.F.A. '91/H&D) founded an independent company, Music Intermix, that brings new music to the masses through high-quality video production. The company works to promote popular local musicians while raising money for the worldwide causes and charities it supports.

Cari Freno (M.F.A. '07/A) was in the "Feed" show at 1708 Gallery in Richmond, Va., and her work was reviewed in the September/October issue of *Art Papers*. Freno was also featured in "I Don't Watch the Internet" at the Fleischer/Ollman Gallery in Philadelphia.

Keith Hanlon (M.M. '07/A) performed at the VCU alumni board's first recital.

Arthur Hash (B.F.A. '91/A) was in the "Stimulus Project" show at Sienna Gallery in Lenox, Mass.

Brooke Hine's (M.F.A. '04/A) installation, "Allogamy," appeared in Philly HOME Magazine last fall.

Katie Hudnall (M.F.A. '05/A) was featured in the "Woman in Wood" exhibit at Arrowmont in Tennessee. Hudnall also received an honorable mention for the Raphael Prize from the Society for Contemporary

Craft in Pittsburgh, and had her first solo show, "An Indirect Path," at the Art Loft Gallery in Madison, Wis.

Matt Isaacson (M.F.A. '09/A) and **Susana Almuina** (M.F.A. '09/A) were accepted into the \$250,000 Art-Prize competition in Grand Rapids, Mich. Isaacson was also a teaching assistant at Pilchuck for Rob Stern in August and was mentioned in *Ceramics Monthly* for an exhibition he curated at Columbus State University.

Akiko Jackson (M.F.A. '09/A) was in the Australian Ceramics Triennale at the Sydney College of the Arts for the month of July and in the Australian invitational exhibit "Young Guns," curated by Jan Guy. Jackson's work was also featured in "The Object: Found, Multiplied, Manipulated" at the Ridderhof Martin Gallery at the University of Mary Washington.

Keith Mendak (M.F.A. '09/A) is teaching music theatrical performance and English in Seoul, South Korea, with Hello Kid Actor.

Cynthia Myron (M.F.A. '04/A), **Debbie Quick** (M.F.A. '06/A), **Adam Welch** (M.F.A. '03/A) and **Lizzie Perkins** (M.F.A. '04/A) are included in "Generously Odd: Craft Now," an exhibit that chronicles the unique territory currently being examined by today's avant-garde craft artists. **Travis Townsend** (M.F.A. '00/A) curated the exhibit.

Kent Perdue (B.F.A. '09/A) has been busy with his Windgate Fellowship and at his residency at Arrowmont.

Lizzie Perkins (M.F.A. '04/A) was in the "Art of Fine Craft: National Juried Exhibition" in the Elder Gallery at Nebraska Wesleyan University. The exhibit was held in conjunction with the Art of Fine Craft Conference.

Meg Roberts (B.F.A. '09/A) had two pieces included in Garth Johnson's "1000 Ideas for Creative Reuse," which was released Nov. 1, 2009. She also had her first solo show at the Appalachian Center for Craft.

Fiona Ross (M.F.A. '07/A) had a solo show at Hollins University in Roanoke, Va., which opened January 2010.

Caitie Sellers (B.F.A. '07/A) had work in "Sparkle Plenty" at Quirk Gallery in Richmond, Va.

Kazue Taguchi (M.F.A. '07/A) worked as an artist assistant for Czech artist Jan Ambruz at Pilchuck and was an artist-in-residence at the Newark Museum in New Jersey from Jan. 4-Feb. 10, 2010. Taguchi was also in a two-person show at PS122 gallery in New York City, Jan. 30-Feb. 21, 2010.

Travis Townsend (M.F.A. '00/A) received the Merit Award from the Society for Contemporary Craft in Pittsburgh.

Adam Welch (M.F.A. '03/A) gave the keynote lecture, as well as an artist lecture, at the Figuration to Fragmentation conference at the University of Kentucky in October 2009. He also featured work at the Highstown, N.J., Harvest Fair and wrote "The Ceramic Sphere: Newer Ceramics Criticism and the Expanding Field," a nine-page article on a theory of ceramics and criticism in Ceramics Art and Perception.

Erin Williams (M.F.A. '01/A) had work featured in "The Little Deaths" exhibit at Shadow Space Gallery in Philadelphia, which opened Dec. 4, 2009.

Faculty and staff

Shay Church, ceramics professor, was included in the \$250,000 ArtPrize competition in Grand Rapids, Mich.

Sonya Clark, chair of the Department of Craft and Material Studies, was one of eight women from throughout Virginia recognized as an Outstanding Woman in the Arts by the Virginia Commission on the Arts. Clark was also in "The Mansion Project" exhibit at Rutgers University, Newark, and "A Complex Weave" at the Stedman Gallery at Rutgers University, Camden. She was invited to exhibit at the Cheongju International Craft Biennale 2009 in Cheongju, South Korea, and at the Birmingham Museum in England.

Susie Ganch and **Natalya Pinchuck**, both professors in the School of the Arts, were in the "Enamel

Recently published alumni and faculty members



Anthony DelDonna (B.M. '88/A) published "The Cambridge Companion to Eighteenth-Century Opera" with Cambridge University Press. His other book, "Genre in Eighteenth-Century Music," was published by Steiglein Publishing in 2008.

Judith Fox published "I Still Do: Loving and Living with Alzheimer's," detailing her experience caring for her husband, Edmund Ackell, M.D., D.M.D., VCU president from 1978 to 1990. Fox wrote the book for other caregivers in an effort to reduce their sense of isolation and in hopes that it will help to destigmatize the disease.

Saltanat "Saltu" Liebert, assistant professor of public administration in the Wilder School, published a new book, "Irregular Migration from the Former Soviet Union to the United States." The book is the first in the English language to examine irregular migration from post-Soviet states, focusing in particular on migration to the U.S. Liebert explores the reality of post-Soviet migration where the mostly well-educated former professionals end up in low-wage, unskilled jobs as domestic workers, child care givers and construction workers, sometimes in exploitative labor situations.

Joshua Poteat (M.F.A. '97/H&S) released his second book of poetry, "Illustrating the Machine That Makes the World," a collection of engaging and mysterious poems that inhabit many worlds at once, bridging the real and the imagined, the traditional and the experimental, the surreal and the ordinary. Poteat has received awards from American Literary Review, Columbia: A Journal of Literature and the Arts, Nebraska Review and River City.

Melvin Urofsky, professor in the Department of History, published "Louis D. Brandeis: A Life," a biographical account of every aspect of the Supreme Court justice's incredibly varied career. Urofsky is the author of several earlier books on Brandeis and an editor of a five-volume collection of his letters.

Show" at Velvet DaVinci in San Francisco. The exhibit celebrates the publication of "500 Enamored Objects" by Lark Books and is held in conjunction with The Enamelist Society Conference. Ganch and Pinchuk were also featured in the "Stimulus Project" at Sienna Gallery in Lenox, Mass.

Antonio Garcia, professor in the jazz studies program, published a trombone quartet arrangement of "Go Tell It on the Mountain" with Kagarice Brass Editions.

David Greennagel, professor in the Department of Music, presented at the third biennial National Society for Music Teacher Education Symposium at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro.

Jason Hackett (M.F.A. '05/A), professor in the School of the Arts, was selected to exhibit in the IX Bienal Internacional de Cerámica Artística de Aveiro 2009 at the Museum of Aveiro in Portugal.

Darryl Harper, professor in the Department of Music, released a new album, "Stories in Real Time," on the Hipnotic Records label.

Susan Iverson, professor in the School of the Arts, had work included in the "Conversations" exhibit at the SAS Gallery in Sewanee, Tenn. She also received an award from the Handweavers Guild of America for her work exhibited in "Woven Visions" at the Anderson Arts Center in Anderson, S.C.

Alice Lindsay, professor in the Department of Music, worked with viola students at the Regional High School Orchestra prep day at Old Dominion University. The program, sponsored by the Virginia chapter of the American String Teachers Association, provides experts to coach and prepare high school string players for regional and all-state orchestra auditions.

Daniel Myssyk, professor in the Department of Music, conducted the Senior Regional Orchestra in Chesapeake, Va., on Nov. 14, 2009. He also

launched the season in Montreal with his professional orchestra, Appassionata.

John Patykula (M.M. '82/A), professor in the Department of Music, published an article on the VCU Flamenco Festival in Soundboard Magazine, the journal of the Guitar Foundation of America. He also published his arrangement of Alessandro Marcello's "Concerto in D minor" with Les Productions d'Oz.

Debbie Quick (M.F.A. '06/A) joined artaxis.org, a juried Web site for ceramics artists.

Rex Richardson, professor of trumpet and jazz trumpet, received the 2009 VCU School of the Arts Faculty Award of Excellence.

Sonia Vlahcevic, professor in the Department of Music, gave a lecture recital — "Andrzej Dutwicz. Solo Piano Compositions" — at the College Music Society International Conference in Zagreb, Croatia.

Jack Wax, professor in the School of the Arts, received a 45,000 DKK (approximately \$9,000) Ole Haslunds Kunstnerfond Grant, an unsolicited grant from a private foundation in Copenhagen, Denmark. Wax was honored for his work as a visiting artist at the Bornholm Skolan.

Charles West, professor in the Department of Music, received a glowing review in Letter V: The Virginia Classical Music Blog of his performance of the Brahms "Trio Op. 114, No. 1" at the Paley Music Festival.

Births

2009

Cindy (Shaub) Murray (B.M. '81/A) and **Pete Murray** (B.S. '81/H&S) welcomed a son, Thomas James, on March 9, 2009, after celebrating VCU's CAA basketball tournament win, which they watched from their hospital room.

Spotlight

Alumna builds 'green' home

By day, **Leah L.E. Bush** (M.S. '75/H&S; M.D. '84/M), chief medical examiner for the commonwealth of Virginia, manages four districts in four different parts of the state with more than 100 staff members in her department office. After hours, Bush supervises an equally demanding bunch — the construction crew building her new home.

Two years ago, Bush, a member of the VCU Alumni Association board, set out to build the first EarthCraft-certified "green" home in New Kent County, Va. She wanted to construct a house from scratch and "with the cost of energy always going up, it made sense to build a green home that's energy efficient," she says.

Building an environmentally friendly home has proved quite the education for Bush. "It's not just solar panels on the roof," she says.

The six-bedroom, five-bathroom house sits on 5 acres (Bush cleared only a limited number of trees). The back of the house faces south, soaks up the sun and uses less heat. Bush ordered bricks from a local company to avoid the cost of shipping them from across the country. Her floors and kitchen cabinets are made of eucalyptus, a renewable resource. Even the excess drywall, made of limestone, gets crumpled up and sprinkled in her yard.

The project really turned into a "friends and family" affair, Bush says. In addition to the builder, who was recommended by a friend, the real estate agent who sold Bush the land is the sister of another friend. The daughter of a third friend, who works for a green architectural firm in Charlottesville, Va., drew up the house plans. They, and especially Bush, look forward to her move-in date.

"It will be a fun housewarming party," she says. "We're going to have a good time."

Leah Bush's energy-efficient home sits on 5 wooded acres in New Kent County, Va.



Alumni association

Officers

Donna M. Dalton (M.Ed. '00/E), president
Kenneth A. Thomas (B.S. '91/B), president-elect
Mary E. Perkinson (B.F.A. '91/A; B.S. '03/En), treasurer
Thomas H. Beatty (B.A. '93/H&S), secretary
Paul D. McWhinney (B.S. '74/SW; M.S.W. '79/SW), officer at large
C. Dandridge Massey (B.S. '92/B), immediate past president

Directors

Mary H. Allen (B.S. '80/E)
Robert A. Almond (B.S. '74/E; M.S. '85/E) (presidential appointment)
Peter A. Blake (B.A. '80/H&S; M.S. '88/MC)
Elizabeth W. Bryant (B.S. '84/MC; M.S. '04/MC)
Leah L.E. Bush, M.D. (M.S. '79/H&S; M.D. '84/M)
Julia M. Cain (B.S. '01/En) (presidential appointment)
Rejena G. Carreras (B.F.A. '70/A; M.A.E. '80/A)
William L. Davis (B.S. '74/H&S; M.S. '79/H&S)
David R. Dennier (B.S. '75/B)
Gregory B. Fairchild (B.S. '88/MC)
Aaron R. Gilchrist Jr. (B.S. '03/MC)
Stephanie L. Holt (B.S. '74/E)
Raymond E. Honeycutt (B.S. '76/E) (presidential appointment)
Christopher R. Jones (B.S. '01/En)
Stephen H. Jones (B.S. '75/B)
Shirley R. McDaniel (B.G.S. '99/H&S)
Elizabeth J. Moran (M.P.A. '92/H&S)
John S. Philips (M.S. '78/B)
Edward Robinson Jr. (B.G.S. '99/H&S; M.S.W. '03/SW) (presidential appointment)
John Jay Schwartz (B.S. '69/B)
Vickie M. Snead (B.S. '76/B)
Jacqueline Tunstall-Bynum (B.S. '82/H&S)
Natalee A. Wasiluk (B.F.A. '86/A)
James E. Williams (B.S. '84/H&S; M.S. '96/H&S)

School and affiliated group representatives

Franklin R. Wallace (B.F.A. '87/A; M.P.A. '08/H&S), African-American Alumni Council
Eugene H. Hunt (B.S. '59/B; M.S. '61/B), RPI Alumni Council
Gaurav "G" Shrestha (B.S. '03/B), Young Alumni Council
Joseph E. Becht Jr. (B.S. '80/B), School of Business
Dale C. Kalkofen (M.A.E. '76/A), School of Education
Christopher R. Jones (B.S. '01/En), School of Engineering
Elizabeth M. McAdam (B.S. '05/H&S; M.S.W. '07/SW), School of Social Work
Norma Ortiz-Robinson, Faculty Senate
Malorie G. Janis (B.S. '99/MC), Staff Senate
Gabriel A. Walker, Student Government Association

In memoriam

Raymond W. Darnell* (A), of Mechanicsville, Va., Nov. 9, 2009, at age 92.
Elizabeth W. Hirschler, of Richmond, Va., Oct. 4, 2009, at age 93.
Othmane Jawhari (B), of Henrico, Va., Feb. 20, 2009, at age 22.
Thomas W. Rivenbark Jr.* (B.S./B), of Richmond, Va., July 3, 2009, at age 79.

1940s

Shirley T. Downs* (B.S. '49/H&S), of Columbus, N.C., Sept. 24, 2009, at age 81.
Anne B. Flick* (Cert. '49/A; B.F.A. '50/A), of Richmond, Va., Nov. 1, 2009.
John B. King (M.S. '49/SW), of Richmond, Va., Oct. 10, 2009, at age 89.
Jane S. Lyon (B.F.A. '40/A), of Savannah, Ga., Oct. 11, 2009, at age 89.
Sarah M. O'Hara (B.S. '40), of Yorktown, Va., Oct. 11, 2009, at age 91.
Katherine L. Rowe (B.F.A. '46/A), of Arlington, Va., June 18, 2009, at age 85.

1950s

Robert N. Adams (B.F.A. '52/A), of Kansas City, Mo., Oct. 16, 2009.
June S. Atwood (B.F.A. '54/A; M.F.A. '68/A), of Richmond, Va., Aug. 24, 2009, at age 79.
Muriel D. Barbour* (B.S. '51/E), of Richmond, Va., Nov. 13, 2009, at age 79.
Earl W. Childress Jr. (B.S. '53/H&S; M.S. '57/AHP), of Ocala, Fla., June 17, 2009, at age 78.
Sara P. Gallant (B.F.A. '53/A; B.S. '62/E), of Richmond, Va., Aug. 26, 2009, at age 78.
Francis A. Glover (B.S. '51/E), of Wilmington, Del., Aug. 22, 2009, at age 82.
Mattie S. Jones (M.S.W. '59/SW), of Richmond, Va., Oct. 15, 2009, at age 85.
William R. O'Connell Jr.* (B.M.E. '55/A), of Williamsburg, Va., Oct. 19, 2009, at age 76.
Charlie B. Robbins Jr. (B.S. '52/B), of Bowling Green, Va., Nov. 19, 2009, at age 84.
Robert V. Turner (B.S. '57/H&S; M.S. '60/H&S), of Richmond, Va., Sept. 8, 2009, at age 87.

1960s

Ozell E. Ard Jr. (B.S. '61/B), of Charles City, Va., Nov. 17, 2009, at age 75.
Robert Vance Claude (B.F.A. '66/A), of Richmond, Va., July 15, 2009, at age 75.
Madalyn B. Creasy (B.S. '67/E), of Aylett, Va., Aug. 25, 2009, at age 63.
James W. DeBoer (B.A. '68/H&S), of Colonial Heights, Va., July 11, 2009, at age 62.
Bertram L. Dunnivant* (B.S. '61/B), of Richmond, Va., June 18, 2009, at age 71.
W. Lester Duty* (B.S. '60/B), of Richmond, Va., Nov. 6, 2009, at age 83.
Frederic D. Fraley (M.S.W. '68/SW), of Lynchburg, Va., Oct. 27, 2009, at age 71.
Donna L. Francisco (B.S. '69/E), of Richmond, Va., Aug. 21, 2009, at age 80.
Elizabeth H. Grinnan (B.S. '60/H&S; M.Ed. '70/E), of Richmond, Va., Oct. 19, 2009, at age 88.
Ben D. Gunter (B.F.A. '63/A), of Richmond, Va., Aug. 14, 2009, at age 74.
Raymond L. Jenkins Jr. (B.S. '67/B; M.S. '72/B), of Greenwood, Ind., June 12, 2009, at age 67.
Charles F. Kain (B.S. '68/B), of Richmond, Va., Aug. 8, 2009, at age 66.

Mary W. Lawson (B.S. '68/E), of Columbia, Mo., June 20, 2009, at age 92.

Vance H. Long (B.S. '61/E), of Richmond, Va., July 31, 2009.

Odessa C. MacNeil (B.S. '63/H&S), of Richmond, Va., Oct. 3, 2009.

Jerry L. Semones* (B.S. '69/H&S), of Christiansburg, Va., Oct. 10, 2009, at age 63.

Robert B. Spencer Jr. (B.S. '65/H&S), of Clovis, N.M., Oct. 17, 2009, at age 68.

Martha P. Woodfin (B.S. '65/SW), of Chester, Va., Nov. 13, 2009, at age 66.

1970s

Kenneth L. Barnes (A.S. '71/En), of Richmond, Va., Oct. 22, 2009.

Carl R. Bradsher (B.S. '77/B), of Virginia Beach, Va., Nov. 8, 2008, at age 54.

Dahlia Y. Briggs (B.S. '73/E), of Richmond, Va., June 30, 2009, at age 80.

Drewry I. Cheatham III (B.S. '70/E), of Chester, Va., July 2, 2009, at age 68.

Robert A. Cline (B.S. '73/H&S), of Richmond, Va., Aug. 4, 2009, at age 86.

Audrey H. Conyers (B.S. '73/E; M.Ed. '78/E), of Midlothian, Va., Sept. 13, 2009, at age 83.

Linda Brooks Cornette (B.F.A. '71/A), of Surry, Va., Aug. 12, 2009.

James E. Daniero Jr. (B.S. '78/B), of Fresno, Calif., July 6, 2009, at age 57.

Lex T. Eckenrode (B.S. '70/H&S), of Midlothian, Va., Aug. 2, 2009, at age 61.

Mary D. Gerber (B.F.A. '74/A; M.F.A. '83/A), of Richmond, Va., June 25, 2009, at age 57.

Mildred F. Gardy (B.S. '76/E), of Callao, Va., Aug. 23, 2009.

Elmer R. Hill Jr. (M.B.A. '78/B), of Canton, Miss., Sept. 28, 2009, at age 85.

Debra S. Kelley (B.S. '79/H&S), of Farmville, Va., Sept. 18, 2009, at age 53.

Peggy A. Lancaster (B.S. '79/H&S), of Richmond, Va., Oct. 17, 2009, at age 60.

Sue Ellen Massie (B.F.A. '76/A), of Newport News, Va., Aug. 1, 2009, at age 59.

Allen J. McBride (B.S. '74/H&S; M.D. '78/M), of Rougemont, N.C., Aug. 3, 2009, at age 56.

Harriett G. Meadowcroft (B.S. '72/E), of Highland Springs, Va., Aug. 14, 2009, at age 78.

Mildred C. Megginson (M.Ed. '78/E), of Richmond, Va., Oct. 28, 2009, at age 67.

John L. Parrish Jr. (B.F.A. '76/A), of Roanoke, Va., Oct. 15, 2009, at age 56.

Marcia H. Powell ('79/H&S), of Richmond, Va., Sept. 30, 2009, at age 92.

Patricia M. Rich* (B.S. '73/N; M.Ed. '81/E), of Mechanicsville, Va., Oct. 11, 2009, at age 76.

Thomas H. Robinson (B.S. '70/B), of Richmond, Va., Sept. 15, 2009, at age 61.

Louis A. Sprouse Jr. (B.S. '75/H&S), of Mechanicsville, Va., Oct. 18, 2009, at age 65.

Deborah W. Sullivan (M.S.W. '74/SW), of Decatur, Ga., May 10, 2009.

Jean Wisely Taylor (B.S. '76/H&S), of Goochland, Va., Oct. 29, 2009, at age 56.

Charles U. Terry (M.Ed. '78/E), of New York, N.Y., July 7, 2009, at age 58.

Michael K. Trzcinski (B.S. '78/H&S), of Moseley, Va., Sept. 25, 2009, at age 59.

Melvin D. Twitty (M.S.W. '75/SW), of Portsmouth, Va., Sept. 9, 2009, at age 65.

Elane C. Twyman (B.S. '73/SW), of Richmond, Va., Oct. 15, 2009, at age 58.

Did you know?

Virginia Commonwealth University recycles one-third of its waste. The Department of Environmental Conservation oversees the waste-management contract for the university, including all trash Dumpsters, compactors, roll-off containers and cardboard-recycling containers. The department also manages the international paper contract for the collection of all types of paper from VCU buildings. VCU housekeeping collects the routine recycling inside most buildings. Five full-time and three part-time environmental conservation staff members — equipped with four box trucks and two vans — collect cardboard, mixed paper, bottles and cans from central drop-off locations outside more than 150 buildings.

2009 facts and stats

Total waste: **6,299,000** pounds

Recycled waste: **2,183,680** pounds

1,238,900 pounds of mixed paper

308,200 pounds of shredded documents

264,820 pounds of scrap metal, such as desks, chairs and filing cabinets

74,120 pounds of electronics, such as monitors, hard drives, keyboards and accessories

61,980 pounds of plastic bottles

9,800 pounds of fluorescent light bulbs, batteries and ballasts

Recycling rate: **29.51** percent

James M. Tyler III*

July 18, 2009, at age 81

Mary B. Valentino

Aug. 2, 2009, at age 73

Michael H. Williams III*

July 29, 2009, at age 61

, of Richmond, Va., July

, of Brodnax, Va., Aug.

, of Hampton

Jonathan W. Bradt

Sept. 22, 2009, at age 53

Charles H. Brown Jr.

Aug. 25, 2009, at age 72

Jeffrey M. Burton

July 15, 2009, at age 51

Horace E. Clay

, of Richmond, Va., Oct. 8, 2009, at age 47

Willie W. Cooper

, of Fairfax, S.C., Oct. 26, 2009, at age 76

Andrew J. Costello

Oct. 16, 2009, at age 56

Janice L. Danielson

Aug. 24, 2009, at age 48

Henry S. Fine

, of Richmond, Va., Aug. 25, 2009, at age 50

John W. Finnell Jr.*

, of Chester, Va., July 16, 2009, at age 55

Susan L. Griffin

, of Chapel Hill, N.C., July 16, 2009, at age 46

Katherine T. Hannigan

, of Arlington, Va., Nov. 1, 2009, at age 50

Carole A. Hubbard

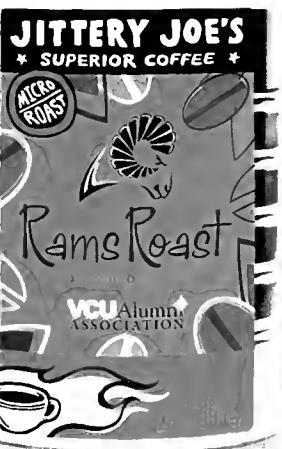
, of Norfolk, Va., July 28, 2009, at age 73

Dennis L. Malcolm

, of Richmond, Va., Aug. 23, 2009, at age 55

Rams Roast available in:

Whole bean or ground
Regular or Decaf
Medium or dark roast
Standard or fair
trade organic



A portion of all proceeds from the sale
of Rams Roast will go directly to the
Virginia Commonwealth University
Alumni Association and the MCV Alumni
Association of VCU to support programs
that benefit graduates and students.

Also makes a great gift! Order 12-once cans online at www.vcu-mcvalumni.org/ramsroast.

VCUAlumni Association

New lifetime members

Betty S. Adams
 Randy Adams, D.D.S.
 Robert W. Adams
 Michael A. Alao
 Mary H. Allen
 Rachel E. Anderson
 Juanita T. Arcaro
 Susan H. Bass
 Dennis G. Baugh
 Tammy L. Berwanger
 Melissa W. Bradshaw
 Jefferson Buruss
 Charles R. Crow
 Robert S. Crowder
 Kelley F. Daspit, APR
 Larry D. Dawson
 Caroline Espree
 Pamela F. Faggert
 Gregory B. Fairchild, Ph.D.
 Edward L. Flippin
 Andrea T. Frazer
 Randy Frazer
 Mark L. Glass
 Michael L. Greenberg
 John J. Hagadorn
 Paul W. Hash Jr.
 Col. Raymond S. Hawthorne (Ret.)
 James E. Helms
 Donald W. Hill
 Forrest Anne Hill
 Christopher Hilliar
 Tracey G. Jackson
 John W. Jennings III
 Adrienne O. Johnson
 Jacquette B. Johnson
 June Y. Johnson
 Rachel A. Kauffman

List includes individuals who joined the VCU Alumni Association as lifetime members between July 1, 2009, and Dec. 31, 2009.

Tenita P. Pickeral (M.Ed. '83/E), of Vinton, Va., July 27,

2009, at age 55.

Kathy O. Pressing (M.S.W. '85/SW), of Wytheville, Va., Aug. 18, 2009, at age 50.

1990s

Kevin S. Blick (B.S. '90/B), of Chester, Va., Oct. 7, 2009, at age 43.
Michael L. Comer (B.S. '91/B), of Montebello, Va., Oct. 5, 2009, at age 45.
Justin S. Rybacki (B.G.S. '99/H&S), of Richmond, Va., Sept. 28, 2009, at age 62.

2000s

Janet M. Horst (B.S. '01/PA), of Richmond, Va., July 25, 2009, at age 57.
Moriba S. Hytton (B.F.A. '07/PA), of Washington, D.C., Aug. 29, 2009, at age 27.
Justin S. Thompson (M.B.A. '08/PA), of Richmond, Va., Aug. 23, 2009, at age 34.

Floyd L. Lane Jr.
Jack D. Layne Jr.
Claudia L. Levy
John A. Lewis
Russell E. Lomax
William C. Moehl
Susan M. Mountcastle
James A. Newell
Lanelle E. Newell
Mark J. Newfield
Nicolle Y. Parsons-Pollard, Ph.D.
Michele Ann Petrone
Ronald W. Phillips
Mark I. Raper
Allison P. Revenson
Sam S. Revenson
Robert G. Ricks
Katherine L. Robinson
Carol A. Rudolph
Mary B. Schwartz
George C. Simpson
Boyd Y. Smith
Charles R. Smith Jr.
Karen K. Smith
Earl R. Southee
Marsha Krippendorf Southee
Anthony Stuart, CPA
Nelson Lafayette Sutton III
Gail B. Tanner
Sara N. Teague
Timothy S. Turner
Sheila M. Vanada
Wesley F. Vassar Jr., Ph.D.
Charles W. Weatherby
Patricia A. Welling
Vicki Godsey White

Faculty and staff

James Dudley Pendleton III, emeritus professor of English, died Dec. 29, 2009, at age 79. He joined the Richmond Professional Institute Department of English in 1958 and served as dean of students and chairman of freshman English. He founded VCU's M.F.A. in Creative Writing and served as the program's first playwright. He had 10 stage plays to his credit, along with TV, radio and film scripts. In 1979, he won the Governor's Screenwriting Award and the Eugene O'Neill New Drama for Television Award for his play about Thomas Jefferson and slave Sally Hemings called "Rite of Passage."

Friends of VCU

Norman Rolfe, of Richmond, Va., Sept. 28, 2009, at age 85.
Dorothy M. Scura, of Chicago, Ill., Oct. 8, 2009.
Robert H. Spilman, of Greensboro, N.C., Nov. 15, 2009, at age 81.
Roy L. Tatum, of Mechanicsville, Va., Sept. 22, 2009.
Edward E. West Jr., of Richmond, Va., Oct. 6, 2009.

Abbreviation key

Alumni are identified by degree, year and college or school. An asterisk (*) identifies members of the VCU Alumni Association.

College and schools

H&S	College of Humanities and Sciences
A	School of the Arts
AHP	School of Allied Health Professions
B	School of Business
D	School of Dentistry
E	School of Education
En	School of Engineering
GPA	L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs
GS	Graduate School
LS	VCU Life Sciences
M	School of Medicine
MC	School of Mass Communications
N	School of Nursing
P	School of Pharmacy
SW	School of Social Work
WS	School of World Studies

Degrees

A.A., A.S.	Associate Degree
Cert.	Certificate
B.F.A.	Bachelor of Fine Arts
B.G.S.	Bachelor of General Studies
B.I.S.	Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies
B.M.	Bachelor of Music
B.M.E.	Bachelor of Music Education
B.S.	Bachelor of Science
B.S.W.	Bachelor of Social Work
D.D.S.	Doctor of Dental Surgery
D.N.A.P.	Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia Practice
D.P.A.	Doctor of Public Administration
D.P.T.	Doctor of Physical Therapy
M.A.	Master of Arts
M.Acc.	Master of Accountancy
M.A.E.	Master of Art Education
M.B.A.	Master of Business Administration
M.BiN.	Master of Bioinformatics
M.D.	Doctor of Medicine
M.Ed.	Master of Education
M.Env.	Master of Environmental Studies
M.F.A.	Master of Fine Arts
M.H.A.	Master of Health Administration
M.I.S.	Master of Interdisciplinary Studies
M.M.	Master of Music
M.M.E.	Master of Music Education
M.P.A.	Master of Public Administration
M.P.H.	Master of Public Health
M.P.S.	Master of Pharmaceutical Sciences
M.S.	Master of Science
M.S.A.T.	Master of Science in Athletic Training
M.S.D.	Master of Science in Dentistry
M.S.H.A.	Master of Science in Health Administration
M.S.N.A.	Master of Science in Nurse Anesthesia
M.S.O.T.	Master of Science in Occupational Therapy
M.S.W.	Master of Social Work
M.T.	Master of Teaching
M.Tax.	Master of Taxation
M.U.R.P.	Master of Urban and Regional Planning
O.T.D.	Post-professional Occupational Therapy Doctorate
Pharm.D.	Doctor of Pharmacy
Ph.D.	Doctor of Philosophy



Letters from home

By Polly Roberts

When Gene Monahan attended Richmond Professional Institute in the 1950s, she knew that every Wednesday meant the arrival of a letter from home — along with her weekly \$10 allowance and clippings from her hometown newspaper.

"My mother would write me a letter on Sunday night, mail it on Monday and I would receive it on Wednesday," says Monahan, a native of Chatham, Va.

In turn, she wrote her parents once a week with updates about her classes and extracurricular activities, as well as photo clippings from the RPI paper or the Richmond Times-Dispatch. She doesn't recall many phone conversations.

"The pay phone in my Lee House dorm [formerly on Park Avenue] was in the first and main section of the building, and I lived upstairs in the other section of the house," Monahan says. "So when the phone rang and was answered, someone had to come all the way upstairs to fetch me. And long-distance calls were expensive. Back then, you only called when it was extremely urgent and important."

Most of today's Virginia Commonwealth University students don't have to worry about phone access: cell phones are the No. 1 form of communication for teens, according to www.mediawise.com. Instead, they must choose whether to use their phone for calling or texting.

"If I have a story or something long to ask or tell, I will call and talk on the phone because it's easier," says Grace Hazelgrove, 18, a VCU freshman art foundation major from Mechanicsville, Va. "But if it's something short, I will just text."

Her mother, Gina Hazelgrove, says she prefers the more personal connection of talking to her daughter but understands the busy life of a college student sometimes requires texting.

"Texting is often quicker and easier, especially for my daughter who answers texts faster when she is involved in something," Gina

Hazelgrove says. "I can also text and not disturb others around me by talking. I learned to text because that is the way my children prefer to communicate. That is all they do with their friends."

Indeed, www.mediawise.com reports that 60 percent of teens send text messages daily — with an average of 440 sent texts a week. The Hazelgroves communicate by phone or text every couple of days. Both also are members of the online social networking Web site Facebook.

"I do keep up with what Grace is doing and get to see all of her pictures," Gina Hazelgrove says. "We do talk at times on Facebook. I'm usually the one who initiates it."

Monahan's two sons attended college in the 1980s and kept in touch mostly by a landline phone — but she had to rely on them to call.

"I think it is wonderful for parents to have almost constant communication with their kids today whereas we would sometimes go weeks without hearing from ours," she says.

She does regret, however, that recent college students won't have a record of their communication the way she and her peers do.

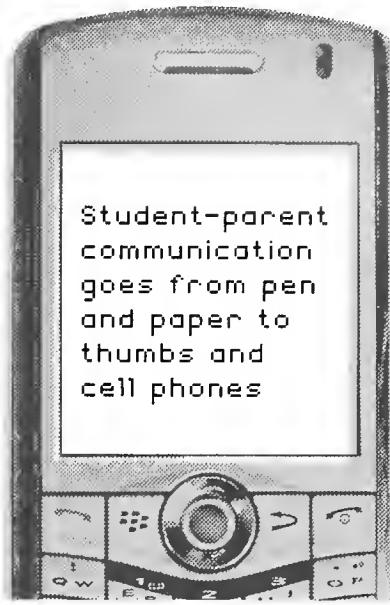
"There won't be many letters that can be read years and years later," Monahan says.

But perhaps the memories live on — regardless of whether they arrive as a letter or text. As she tells the story of her weekly letters and allowance, Monahan vividly remembers how she and her then-boyfriend **Tom Monahan** (B.S. '56/MC) celebrated the envelope's arrival.

"My boyfriend — Tom Monahan whom I later married in 1956 — would cash the check, and we would go out the night it arrived," she says.

Today's students still experience the thrill of a little extra cash from mom and dad — only instead of receiving a check in the mail, they get a text about a transfer to their online banking account.

Polly Roberts is a contributing writer for Shafer Court Connections.



Datebook

ALUMNI MONTH

Come back to campus for a monthlong alumni celebration. For a complete calendar and more details on these and all Alumni Month events, visit www.vcu-mcvalumni.org.

April 1

Alumni Month Kick-off

Richard T. Robertson Alumni House
MCV Alumni House and Paul A. Gross
Conference Center
(804) 828-2586

April 9, 16, 23 and 30

Rams at Work

Promote VCU in the workplace — we'll even send you pennants, stickers, buttons and decals to display and distribute.
(804) 828-8191

April 10

Rams Night Out

Various locations
(804) 828-8191

April 17

Alumni Family Day at Swiders Sports Park
Prince George, Va.
(804) 828-8191

April 18-23

Affordable Housing Week

Various service projects
(804) 827-1904

April 23

Richard T. Robertson Alumni House 10-year Anniversary Celebration
Robertson Alumni House
(804) 828-7020

April 23-25

Reunion Weekend

Various events/locations
(804) 828-7020

April 24

VCU Cycling Club event

A 22-mile ride to Osborne Boat Landing
(804) 828-2586

2011 Alumni Travel Presentation

MCV Alumni House and Paul A. Gross
Conference Center
(804) 828-1672

Resume Writing and Behavioral Interviewing
University Student Commons
(804) 828-7017

CareerBeam Demonstration

University Student Commons
(804) 828-7017

Using Social Media for Marketing

University Student Commons
(804) 828-7017

Book Drive

James Branch Cabell Library
(804) 828-1105

VCU Libraries Workshop: Alumni Database Access

James Branch Cabell Library
(804) 828-1105

Henry H. Hibbs and Margaret L. Johnson Plaza Dedication

VCU Scott House/Ginter House lawn
(804) 828-2586

April 30

Alumni Night at The Diamond

(804) 828-2586

School of Business Golf Tournament

(804) 827-1805

MAY

May 7-16

M.F.A. Thesis Exhibition, Round 2

Anderson Gallery
(804) 828-1522

May 19

New Graduates Reception: Your Passport to the World*

Science Museum of Virginia
(804) 828-2586

May 20

Presidential, Provost and Deans' Scholars Reception*

VCU Scott House
(804) 828-2586

May 22

Spring Commencement

Richmond Coliseum
(804) 828-1917

May 30-June 7

Outdoor Adventure Program: Sea Kayaking in Baja, Mexico

(804) 828-6004

Mark your calendars for these Virginia Commonwealth University and VCU Alumni Association events. For more alumni activities, go to www.vcu-mcvalumni.org or www.vcu-aaac.org, or visit <http://events.vcu.edu> for campus happenings.

JULY

July 9

Tony Trischka, banjo

W.E. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts
(804) 828-1166

July 16

Al Petteway and Amy White

W.E. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts
(804) 828-1166

July 23

Quattro na Bossa

W.E. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts
(804) 828-1166

July 25

VCU Community Guitar Ensemble

W.E. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts
(804) 828-1166

AUGUST

Date TBD

Ram Spirit Walk*

Monroe Park
(804) 828-2586



Ram Spirit Walk

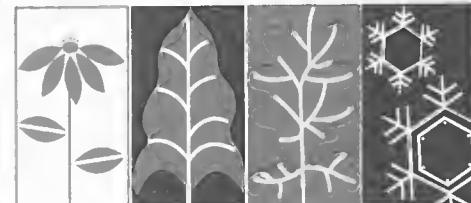
OCTOBER

Oct. 25-29

Friends of the Library Annual Book Sale

James Branch Cabell Library
(804) 828-1105

* VCUAA event



CIRCA

Students playfully skateboard through city streets just off the Richmond Professional Institute campus, now the Virginia Commonwealth University Monroe Park Campus. Even in its early days, the urban landscape of the university encouraged students to look for alternative modes of transportation to, from and around campus.





**Thanks to all alumni who volunteered
for the HandsOn Greater Richmond
service day!**

Check out more photos inside on Page 26 and learn how
you can get involved in the VCU Alumni Association's
Service to Community and VCU initiative.

C o n n e c t ... E n g a g e ... S e r v e

